

Daymare Morphs



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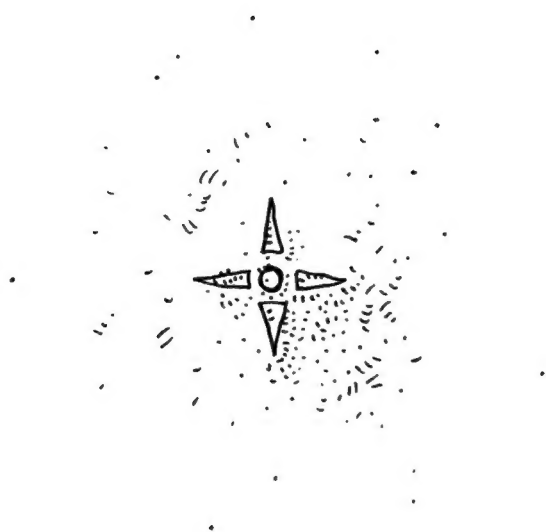
written by Nikodem Skrodzki

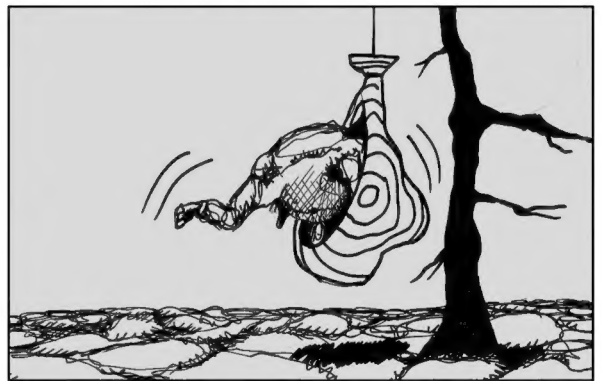
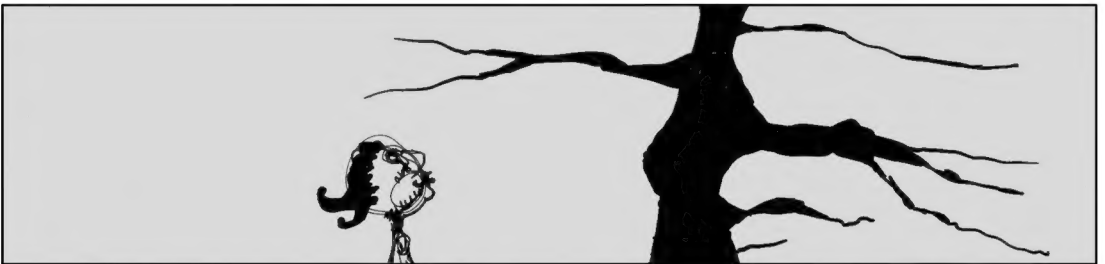
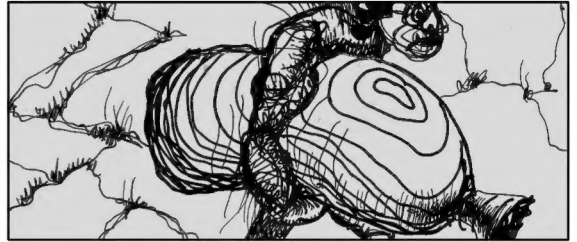
created by Mateusz Skutnik 1997-2001

ebook release 2021

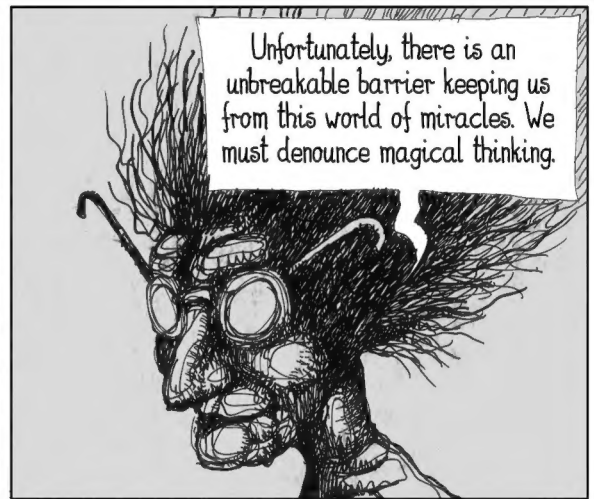
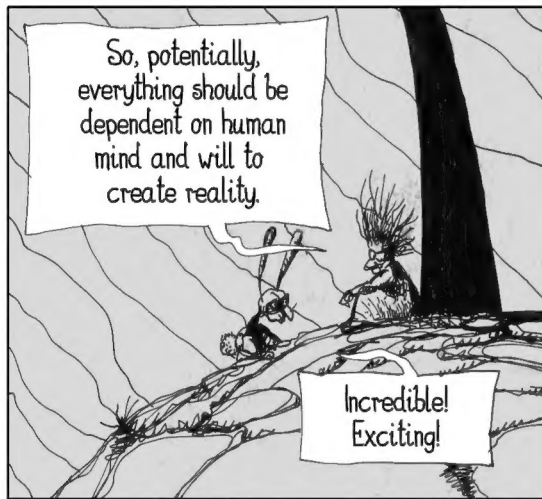
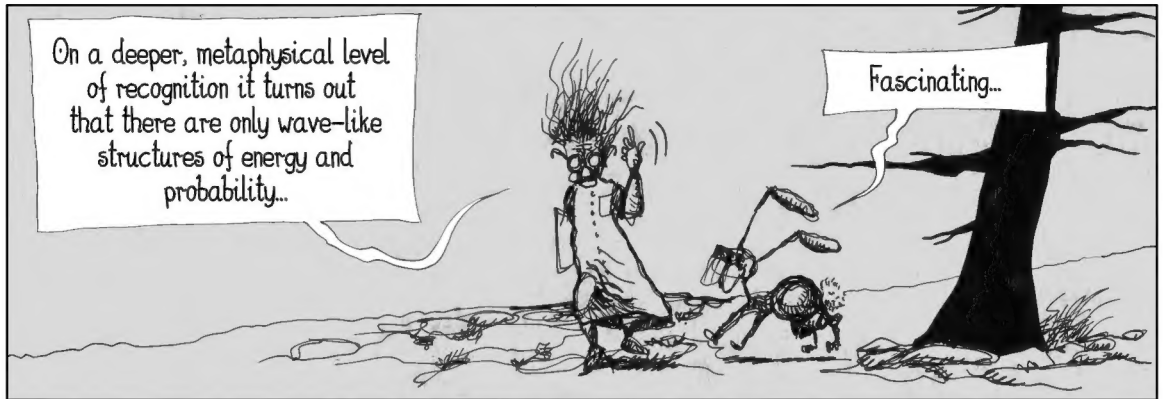
Translation by Mateusz Skutnik

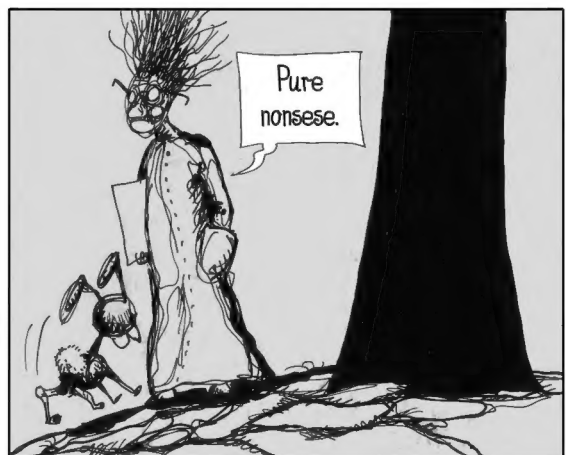
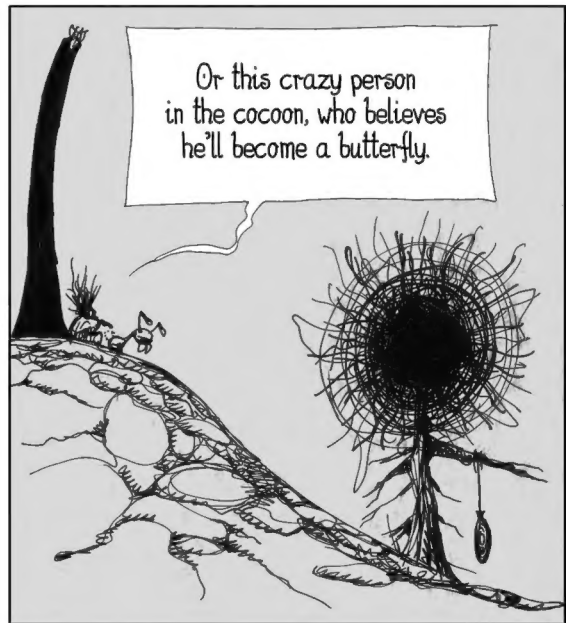
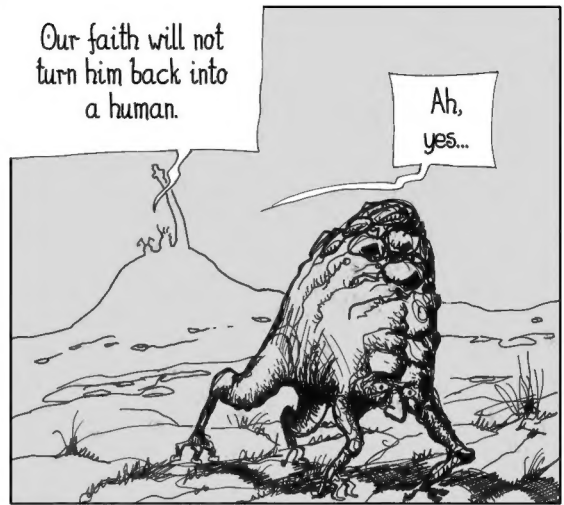
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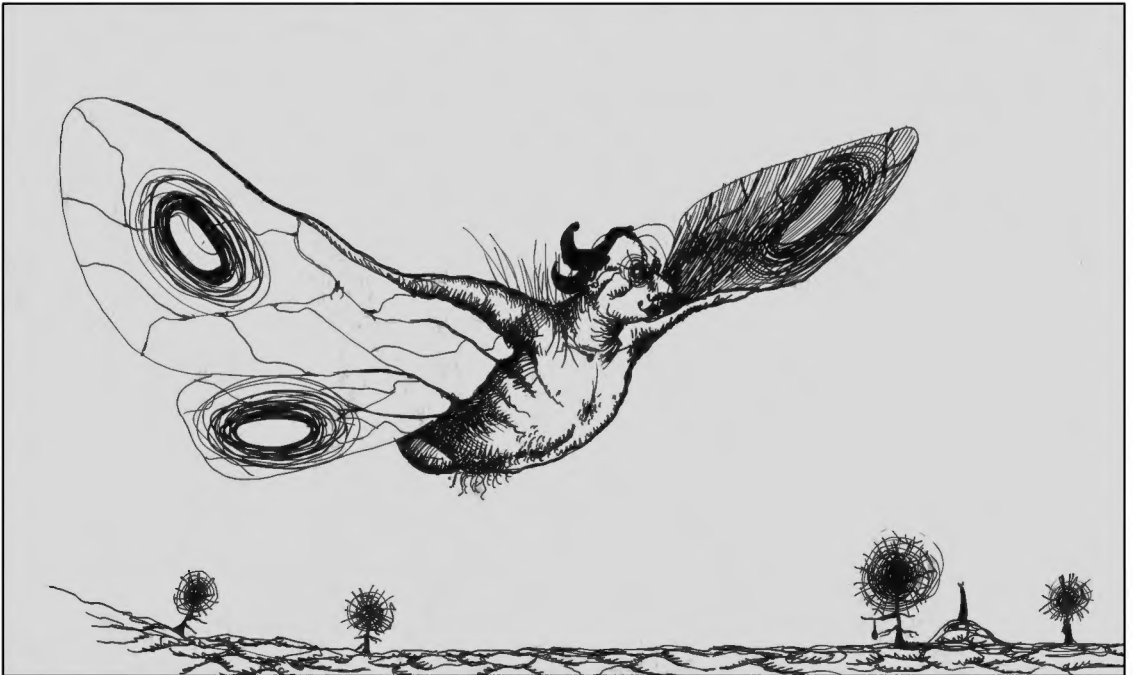
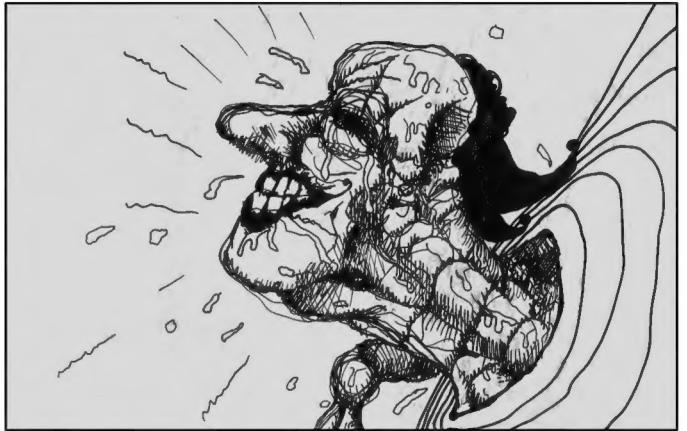
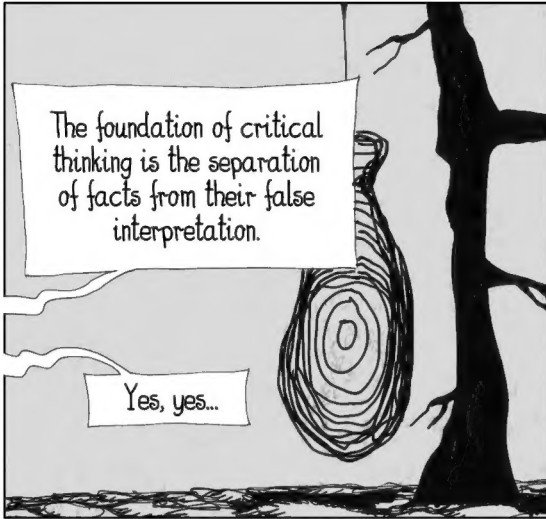


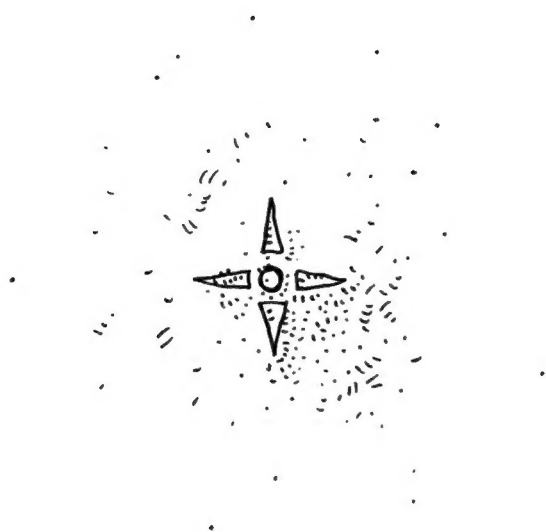


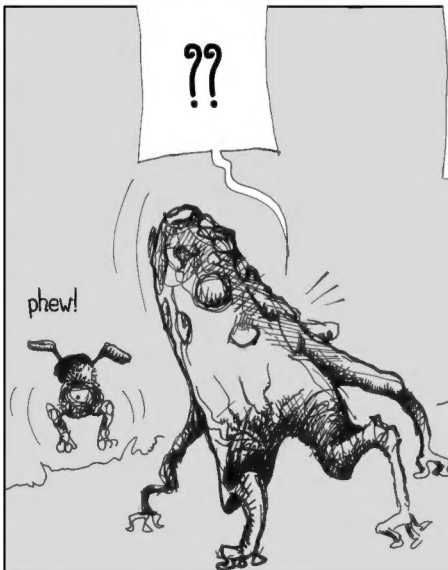
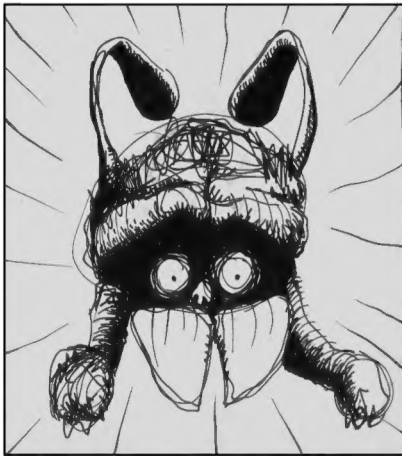
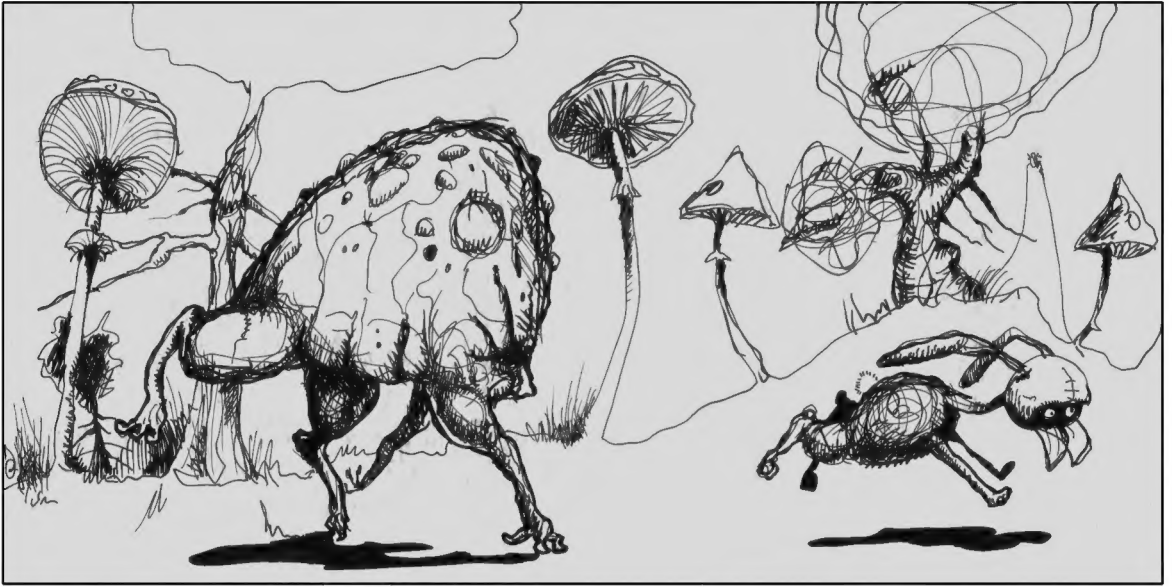
As I was telling you
before, objectively
speaking - matter does
not exist...



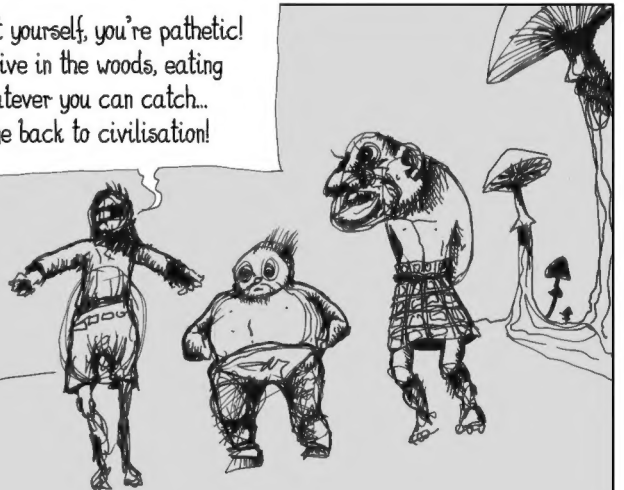




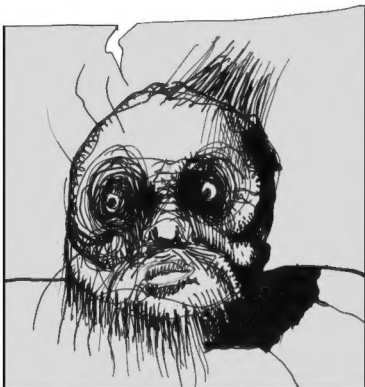




Look at yourself, you're pathetic!
You live in the woods, eating
whatever you can catch...
Come back to civilisation!



Weremorph! Your duty is to
take responsibility for yourself,
as a man you once were!

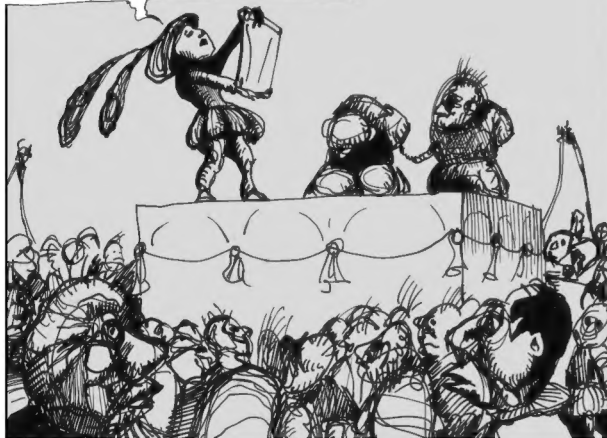


Work on improving yourself
and the world around you in
coherent collective of society!



Meanwhile, somewhere else...

Hereby those two cutthroats
are sentenced to beheading
by executioner's axe...



... with possibility of changing
the sentence to death
by trying to convert the Weremorph.

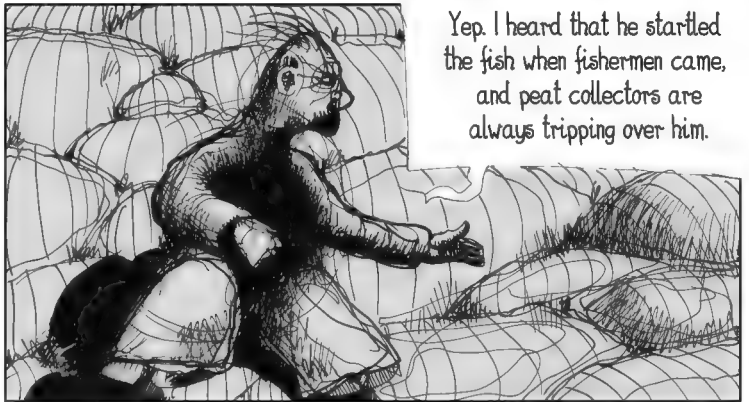




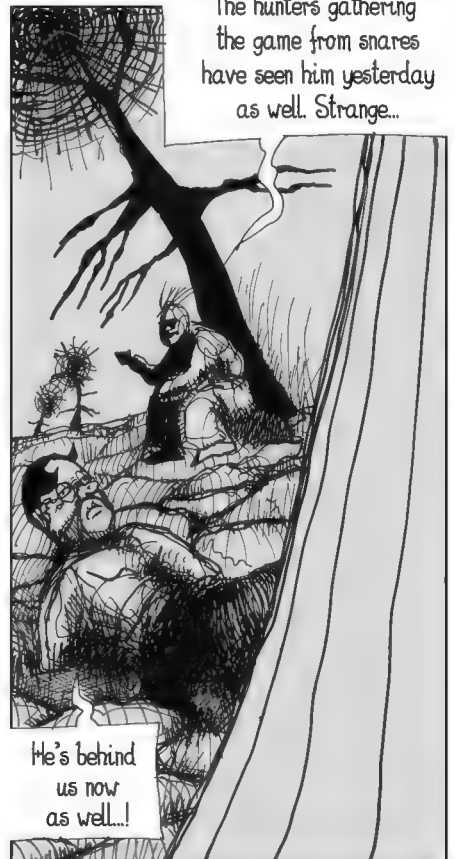
Did you notice,
that everywhere anyone goes,
they always meet the Stilter?



Yep. I heard that he startled
the fish when fishermen came,
and peat collectors are
always tripping over him.



The hunters gathering
the game from snares
have seen him yesterday
as well. Strange...



He's behind
us now
as well...

Yesterday?

Yes.



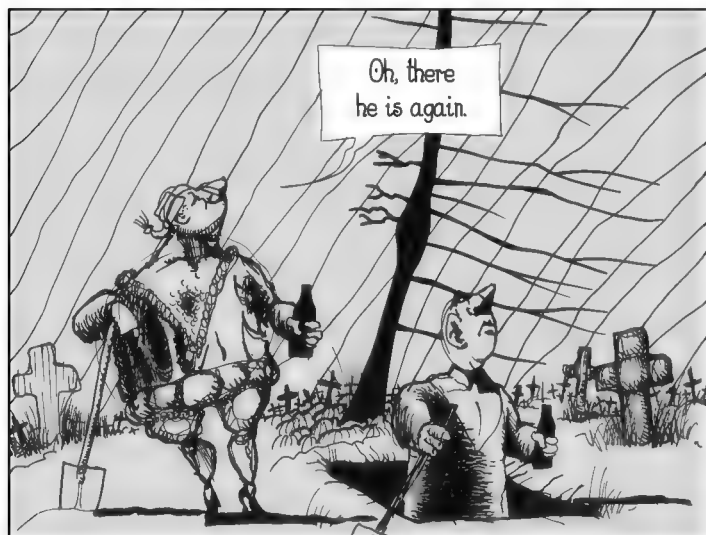
What?

Maybe it's stupid,
but you know what...







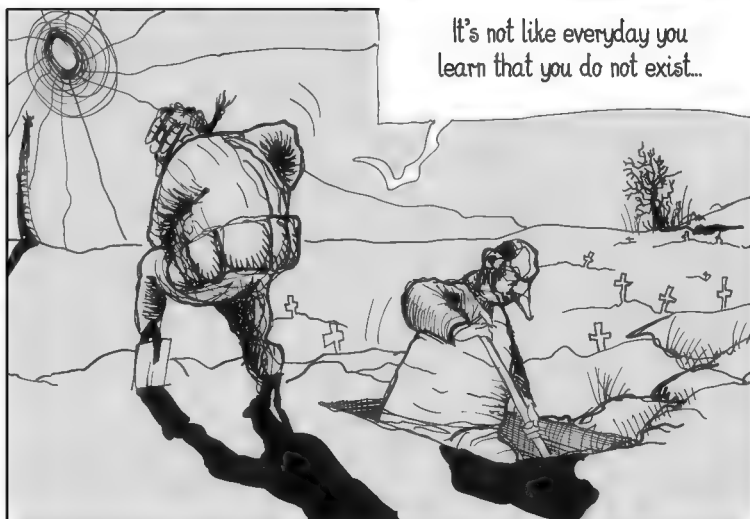
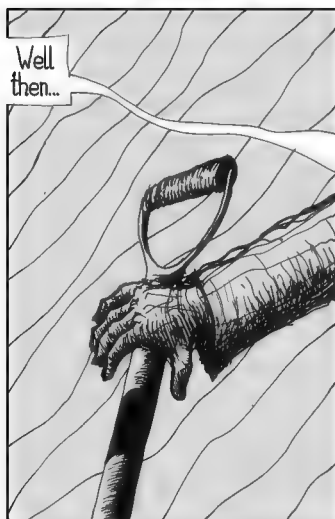
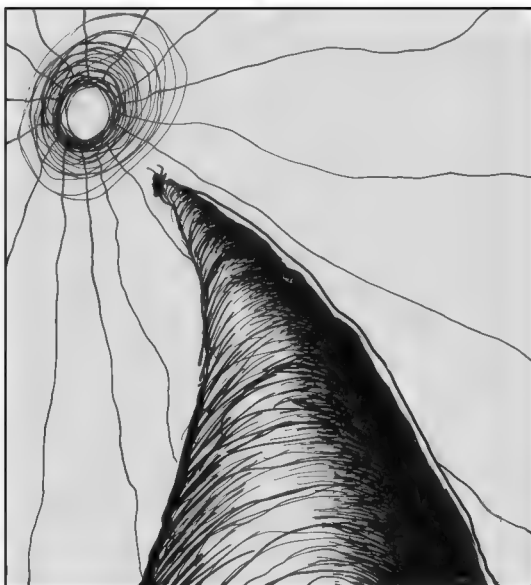


I can.
But there's no point in talking to you,
because you don't exist.

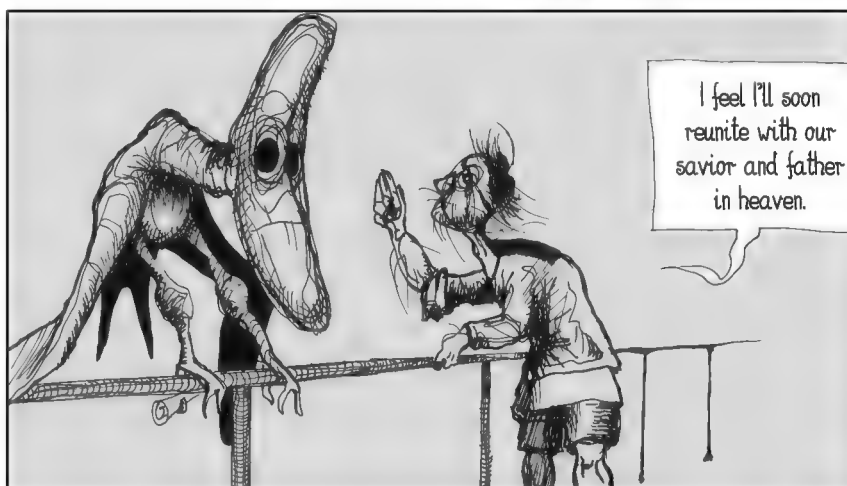
You are nothing
but a projection
of my mind.

The only existing thing is me,
I am the sole subject of knowledge.

There's no need for a conversation
in a non-existing universe.







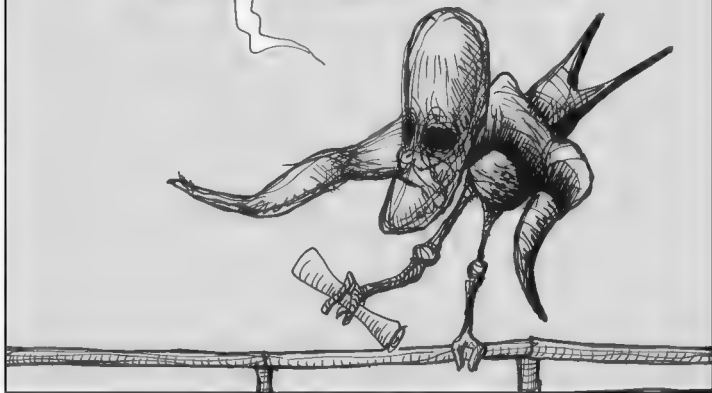
But that's so obvious!
I haven't committed any sin, any evil.
I rejected cruel world, I renounced
everything, sacrificed myself
and my whole life in solitude
for our lord's glory.



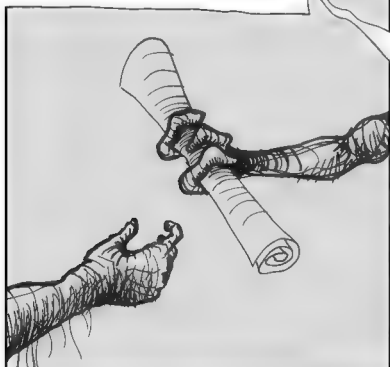
My pure soul will rest
by the right hand of our lord
after my soon to come release
from this plane of reality.



About that soul thing. Bishop Adeodat
asked me to give you this list.



These are requests of
the believers to our holy lord.
If you could deliver that
once you get to paradise...



But of course... Hmmm... Yes...

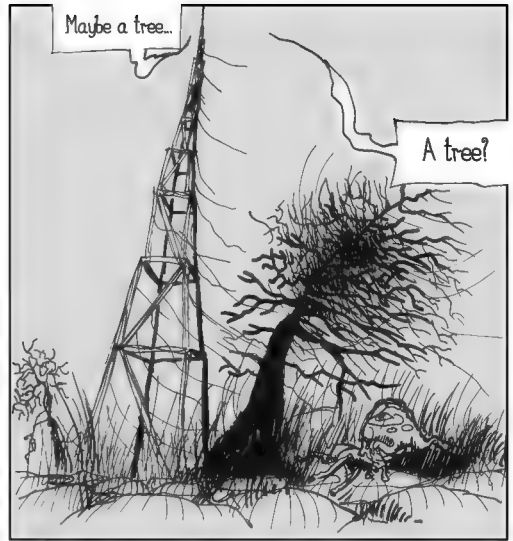




How about you, don't you have any requests?

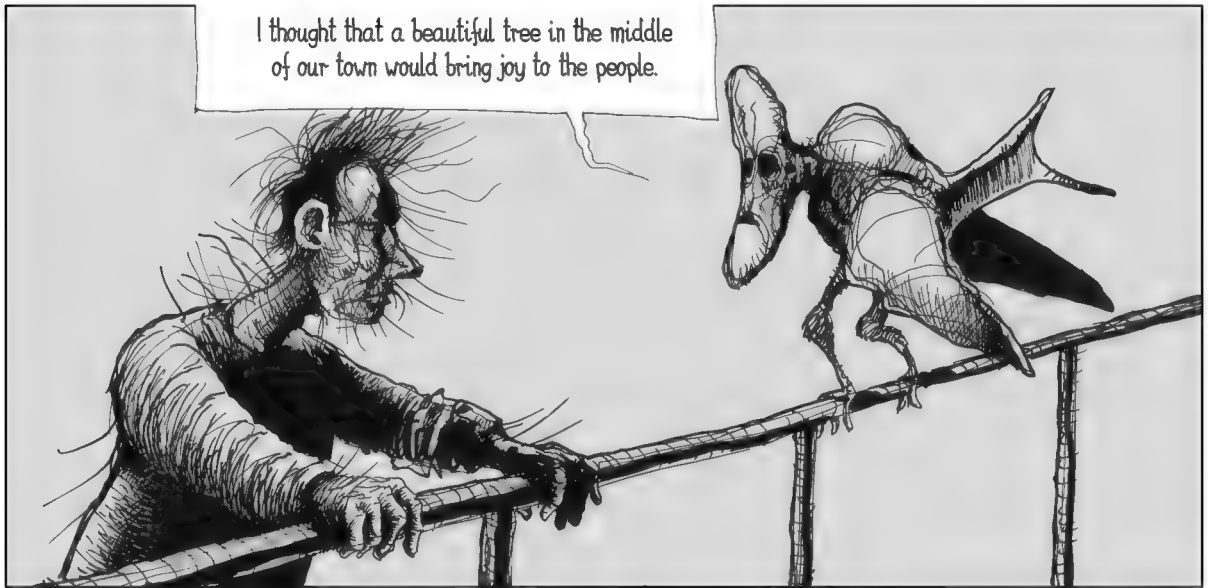


HMM...

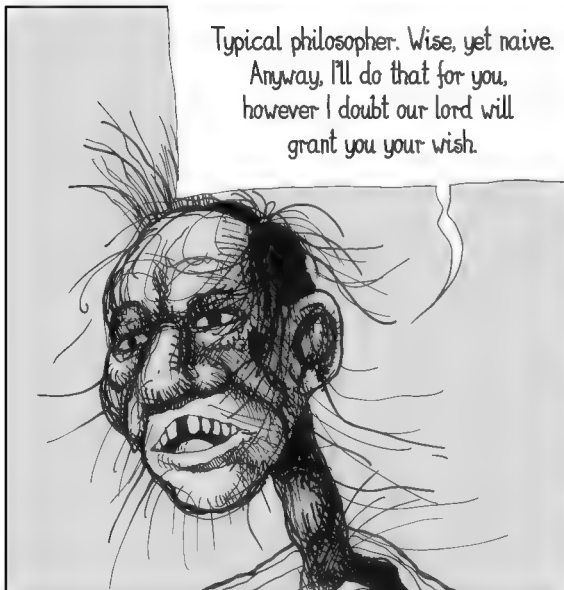


Maybe a tree...

A tree?



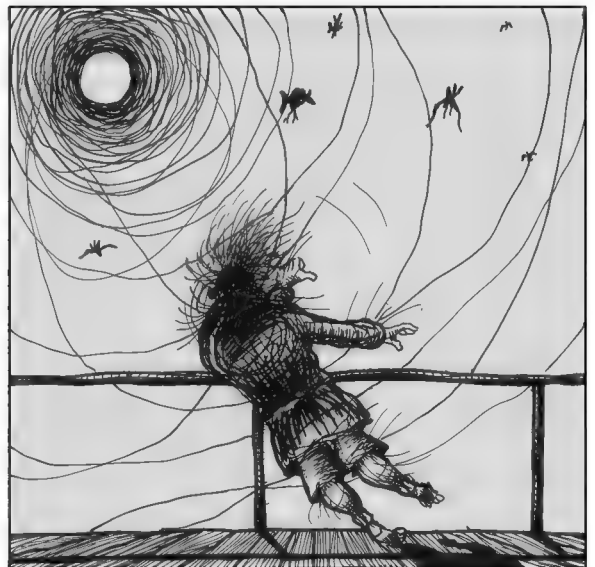
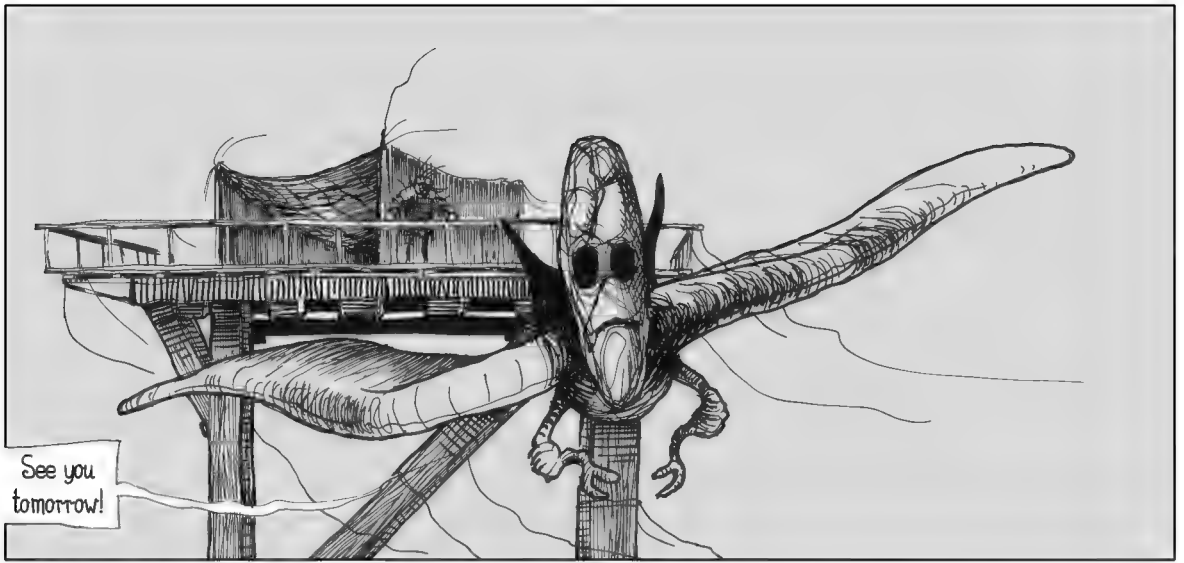
I thought that a beautiful tree in the middle of our town would bring joy to the people.



Typical philosopher. Wise, yet naive. Anyway, I'll do that for you, however I doubt our lord will grant you your wish.

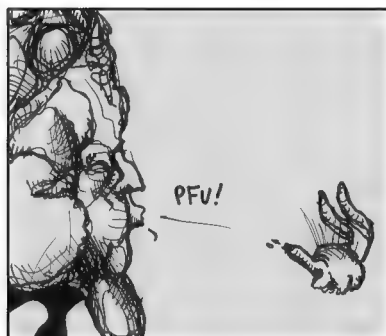
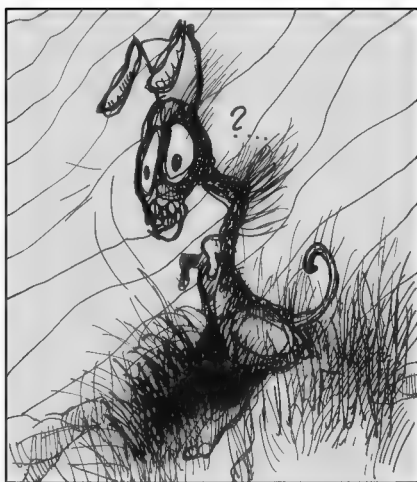


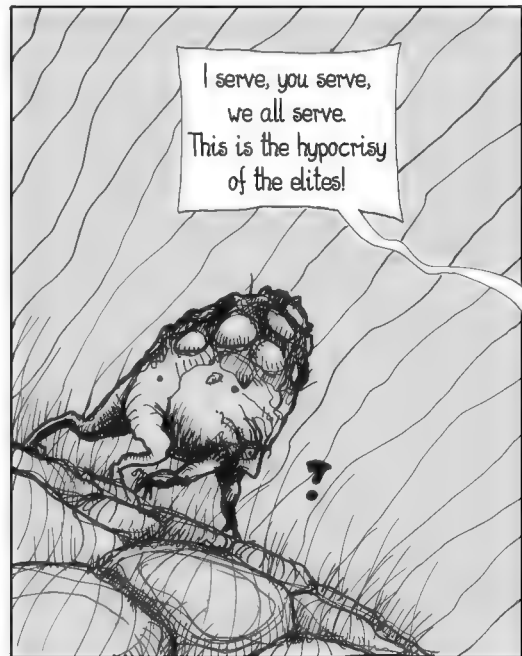
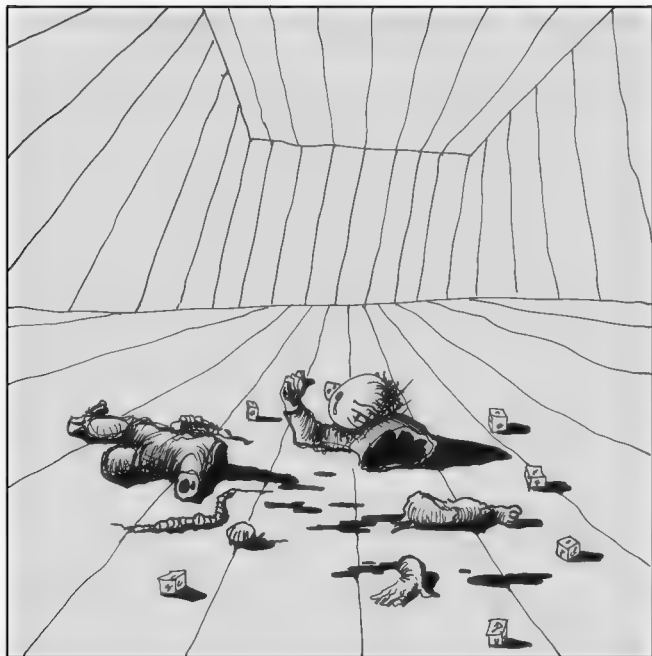
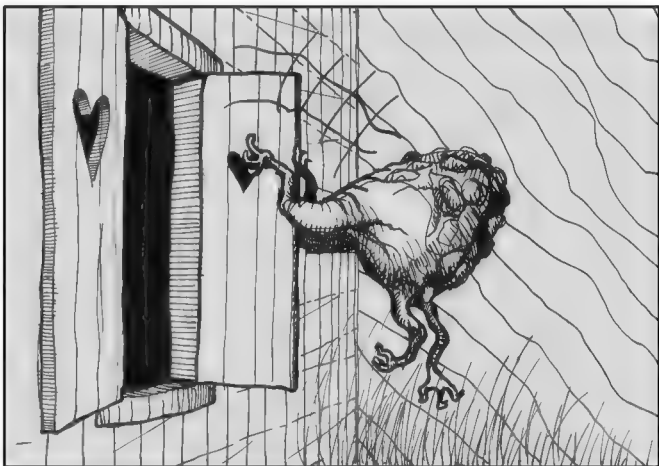
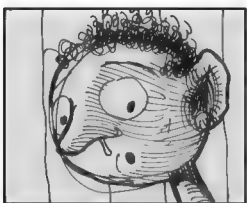
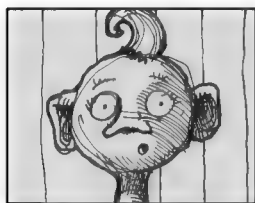
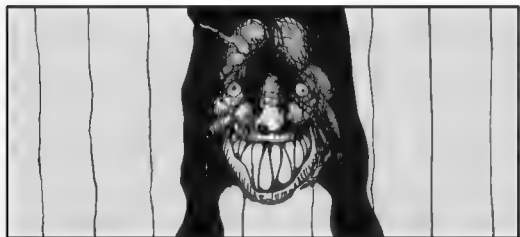
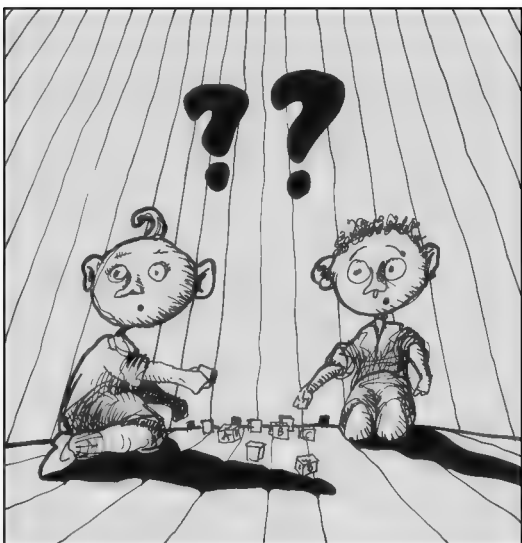
Oh well. I hope you'll get better and postpone your journey to other realms.

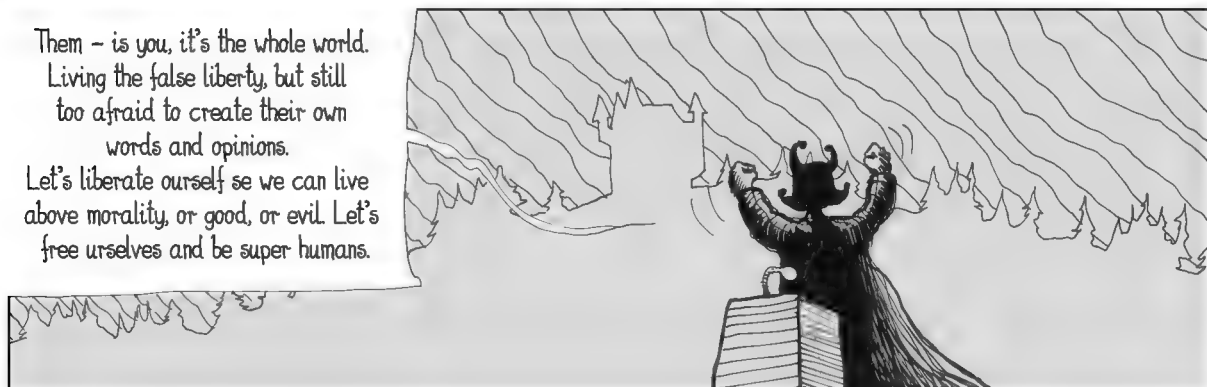
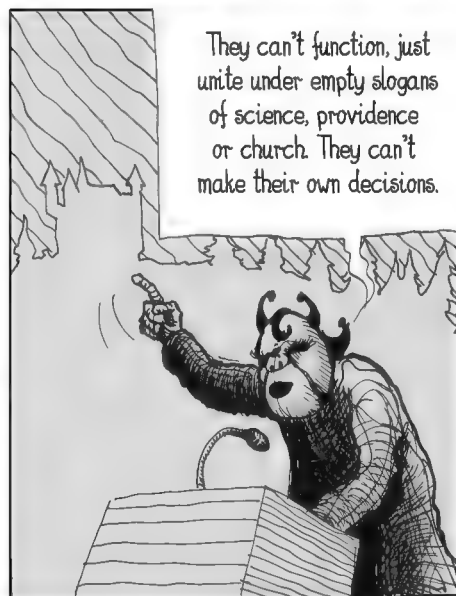
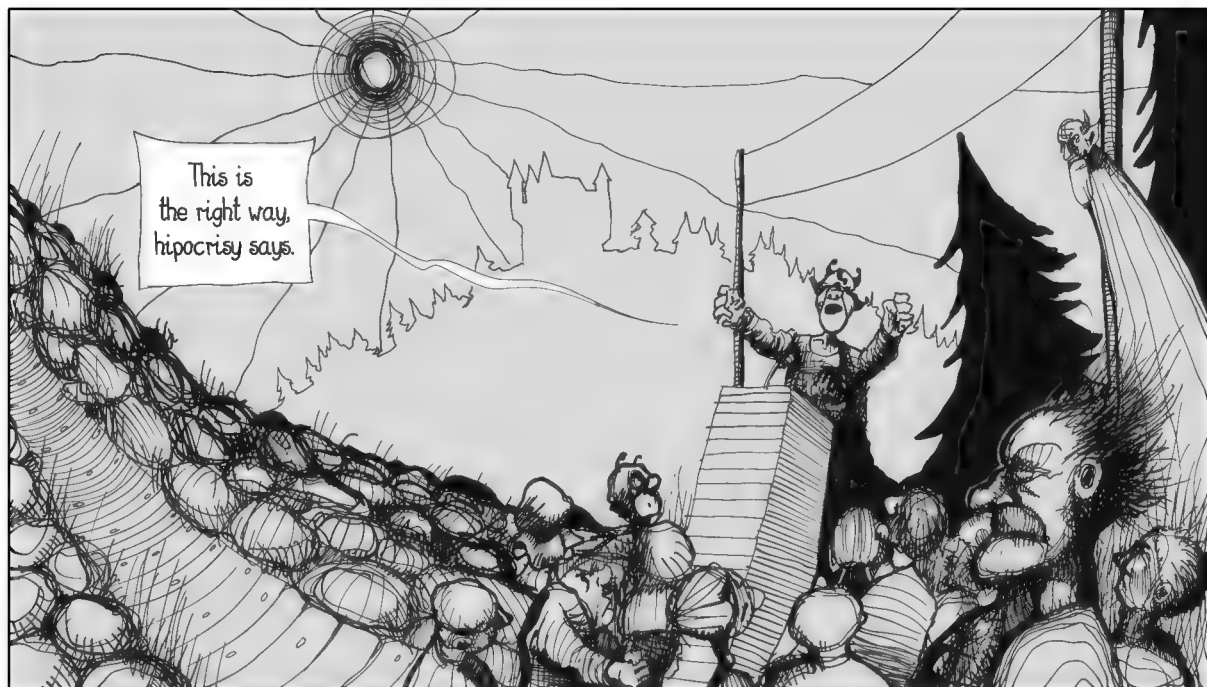




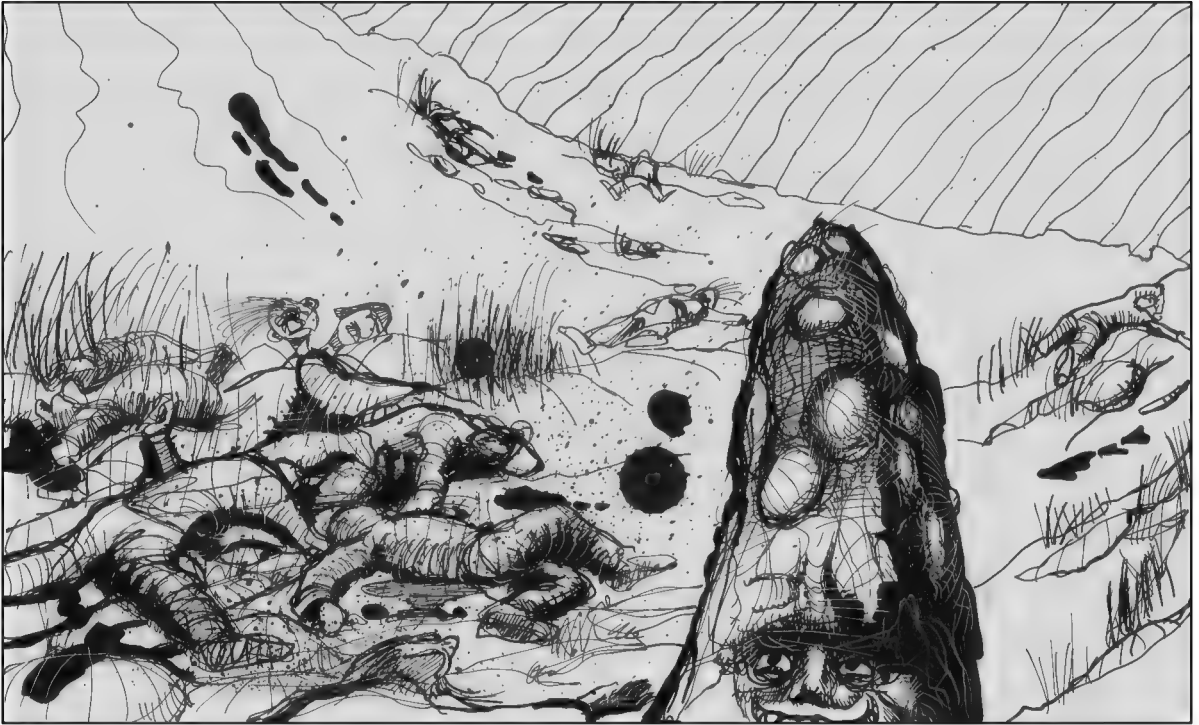


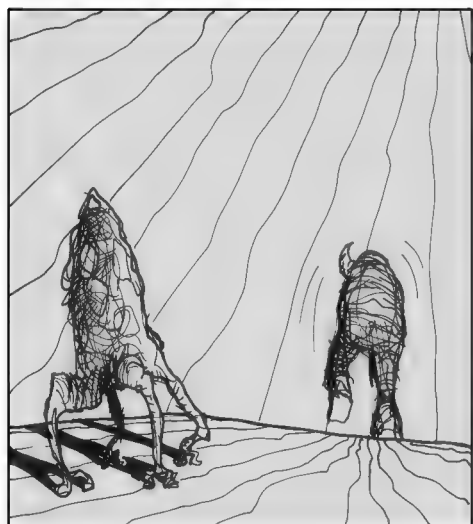
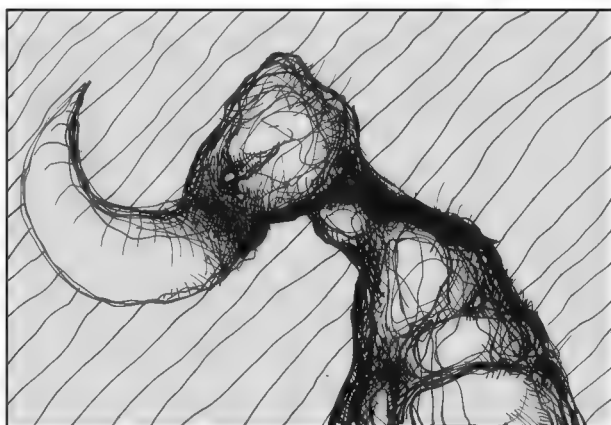




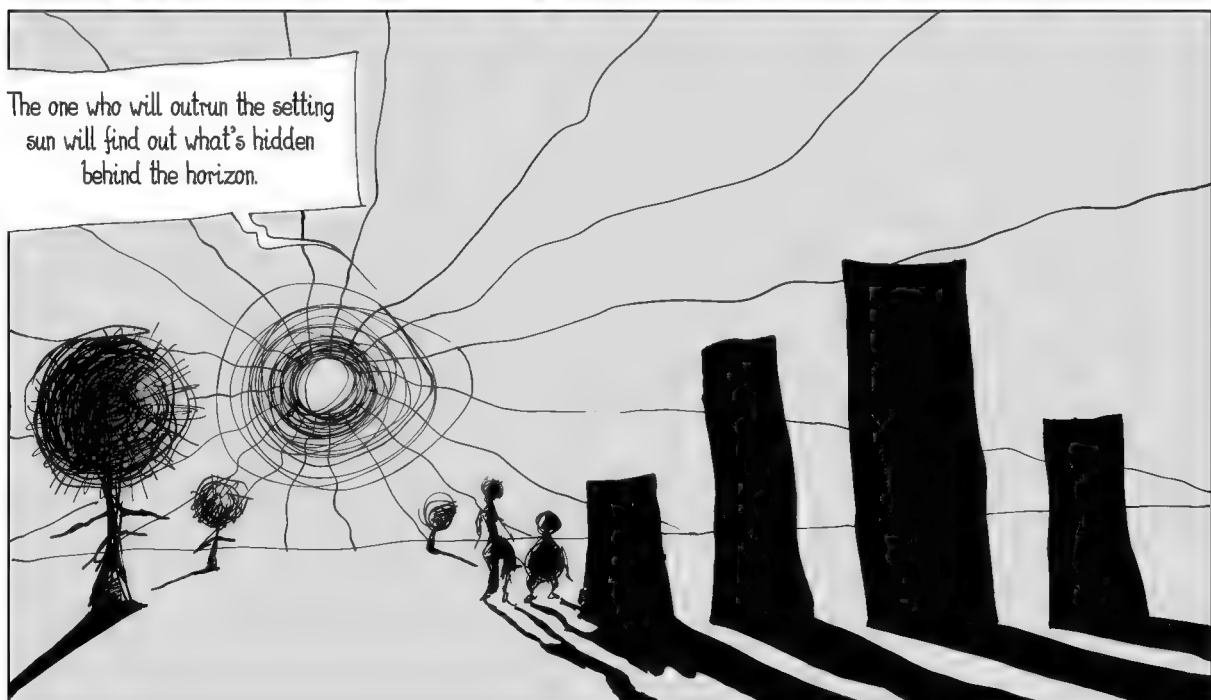


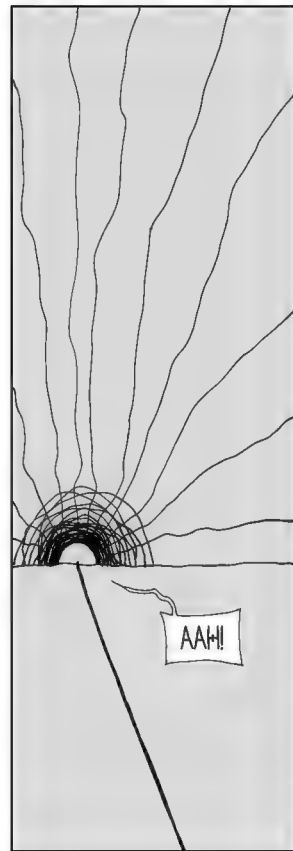
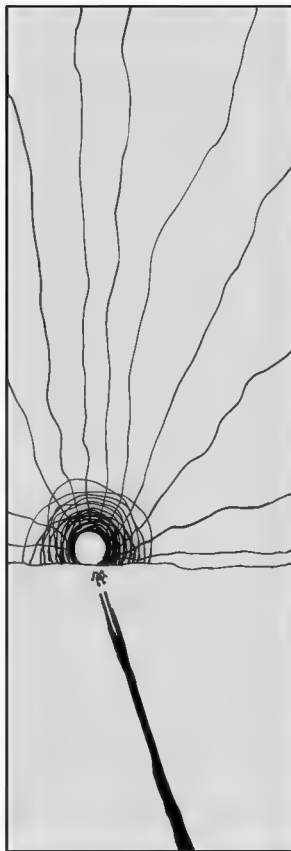
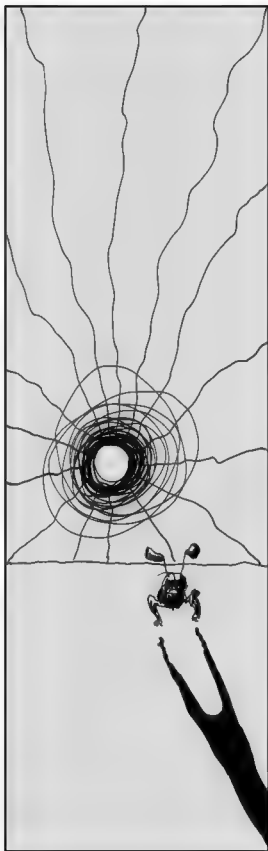
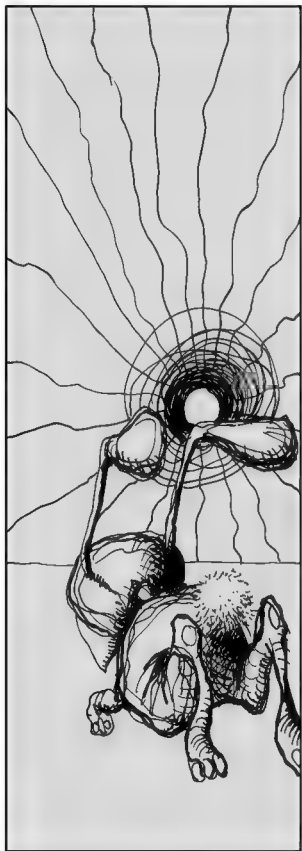
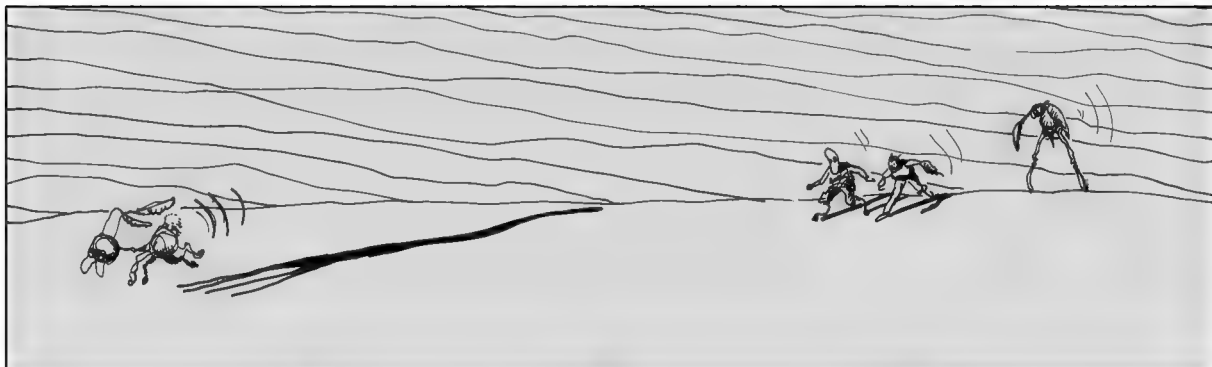
Let your will
to power rule.
Let the power
become morality.



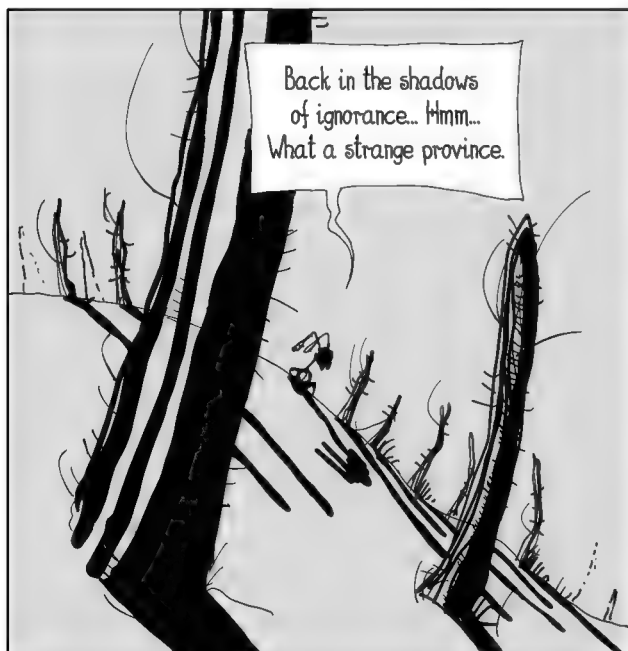
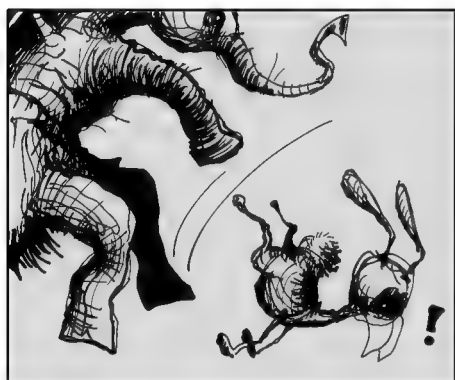




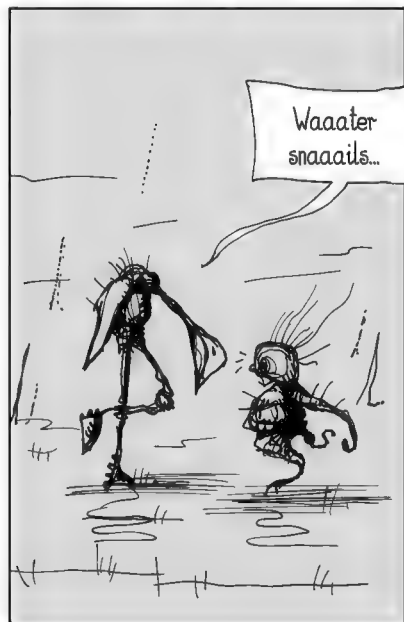
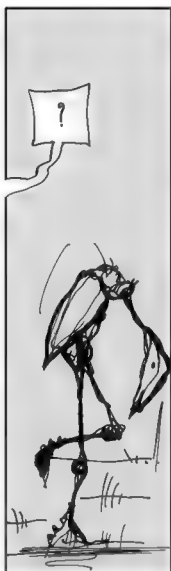
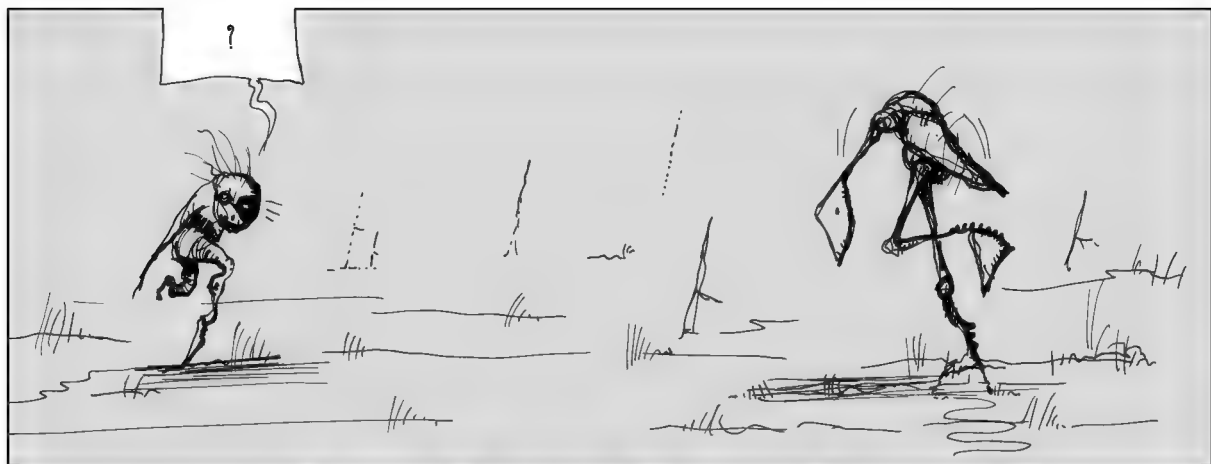












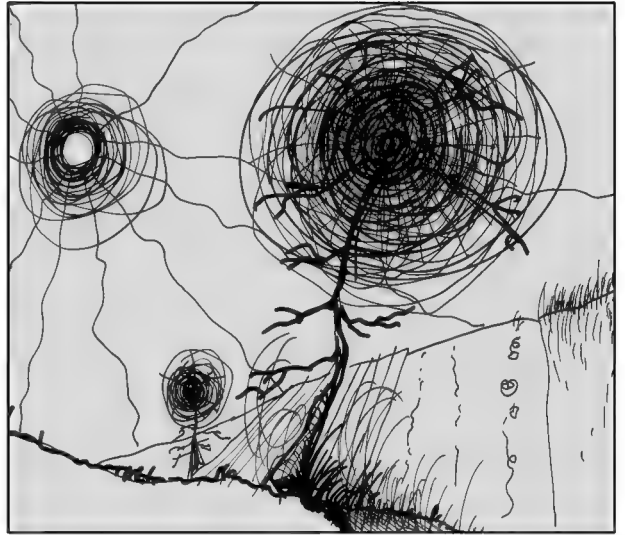




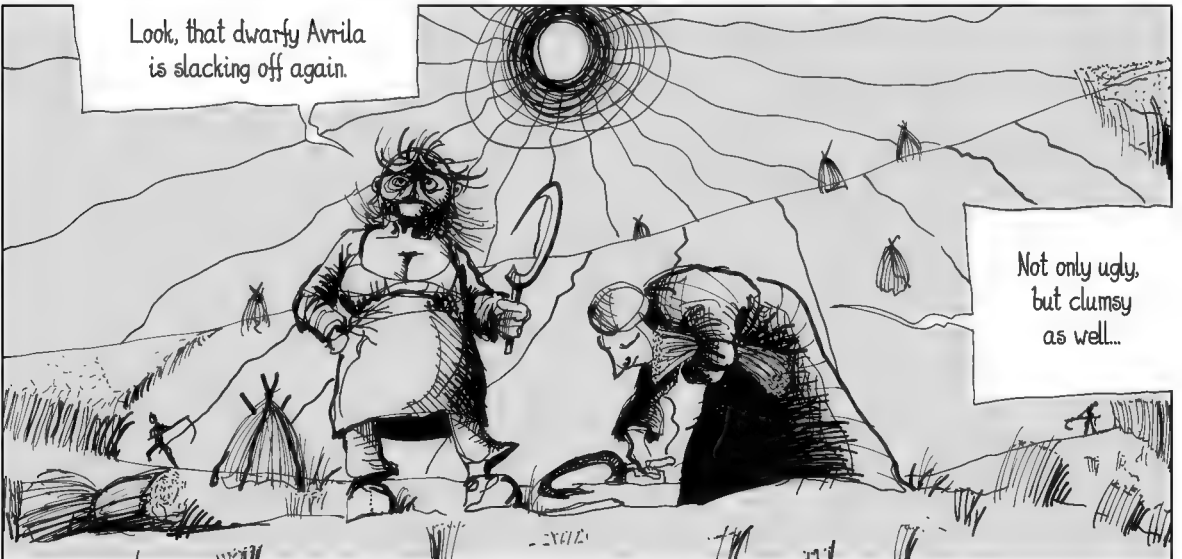
Please come...



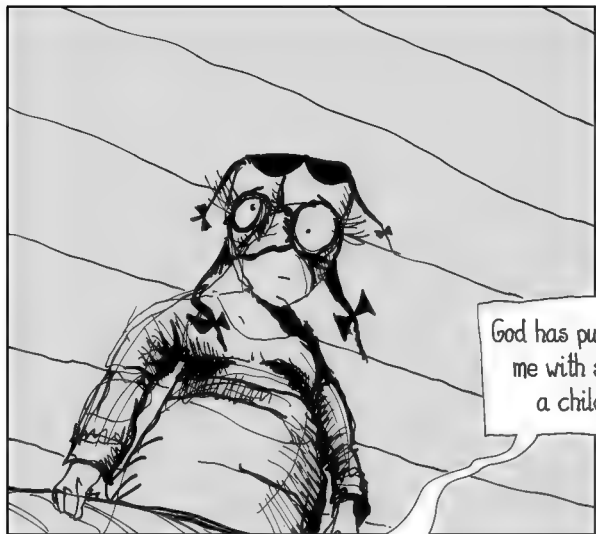
Come
and take
me away...



Look, that dwarfy Avrila
is slacking off again.







God has punished
me with such
a child!



Go on then. Too bad
metamorphs didn't take
you when there was still
time, you ungrateful brat.
Reach that shelf,
will you?



Here?

Yes. Hurry up,
clumsy.
Do you know that
when you die
and face
the judge...



... and he will ask you why
haven't you taken care of
your sick mother...
And then...
Well give me that bloody
medicament already, you sloth!



And then,
you know
what the
judge will do?



I know.
He'll throw me
to hell.





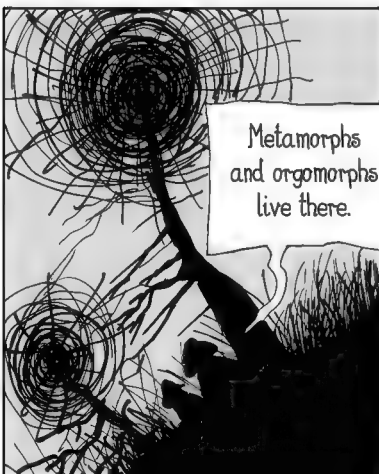
When you look at the horizon,
you can see a pale, grey
line just behind it.



Lots of different
animals live there.
They say you can
find the other end
of the rainbow there...



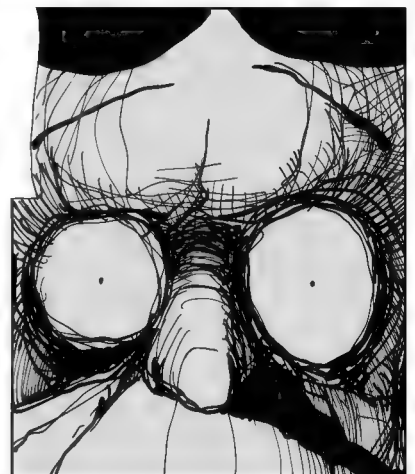
It's where clouds float over
to our realm from.



Metamorphs
and orgomorphs
live there.



And all other
fairy creatures
that live off of
moon glamor.





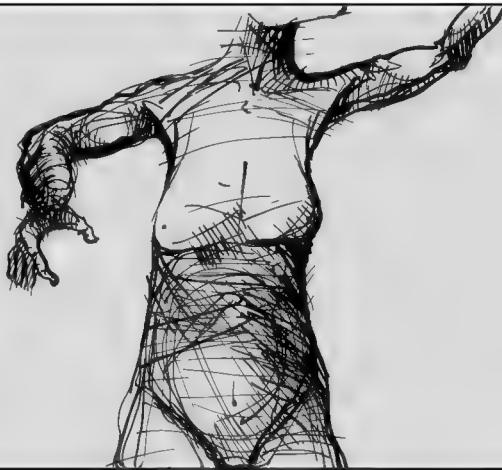
I always
wanted
to dance.



I like
dancing.



One,
two,
three...



To dance...
Forever...

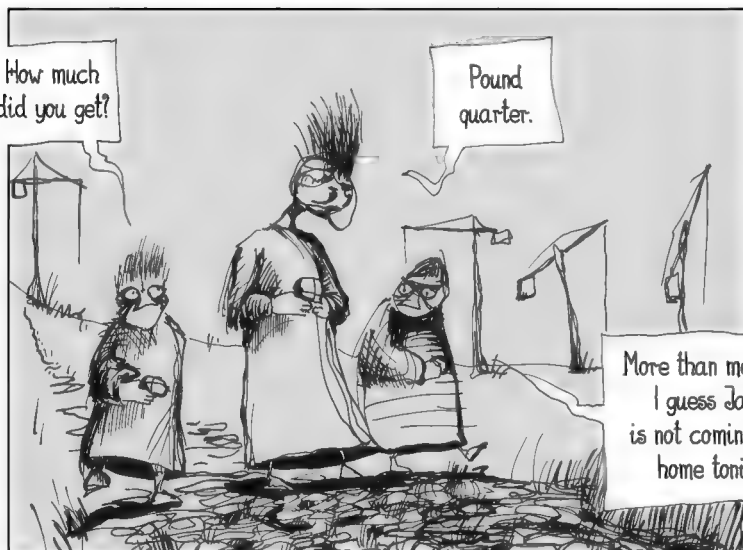






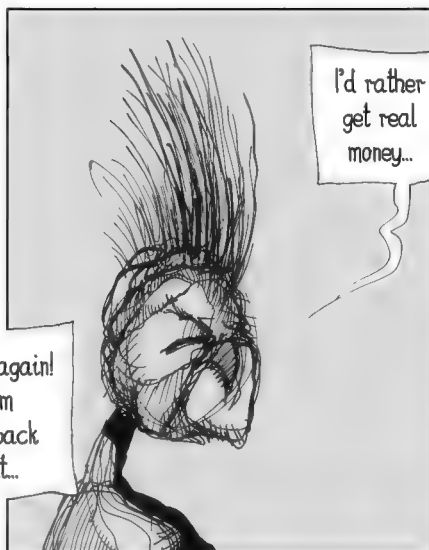
How much
did you get?

Pound
quarter.

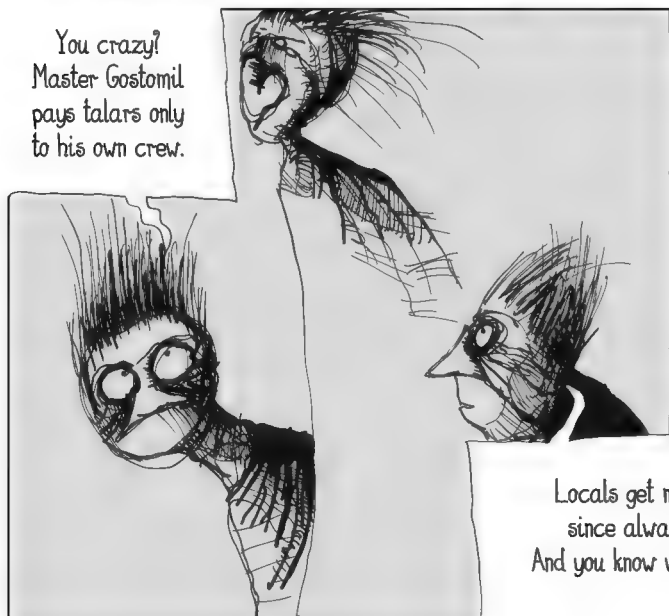


More than me, again!
I guess Jahim
is not coming back
home tonight...

I'd rather
get real
money...



You crazy!
Master Gostomil
pays talars only
to his own crew.



Locals get meth
since always.
And you know what?...

I'm very happy
for it.
He he he.



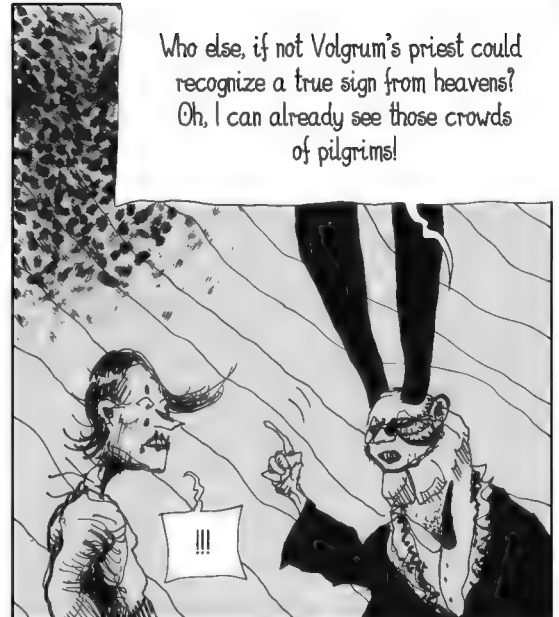












You have to let us through
immediately, seargant.



We're travelling with a relic,
which will make our province
famous for eternity!



First of all, I'm not a sergeant,
but a rot-sergeant already.
Secondly - show me that
alleged miracle.



Oh, how nice!

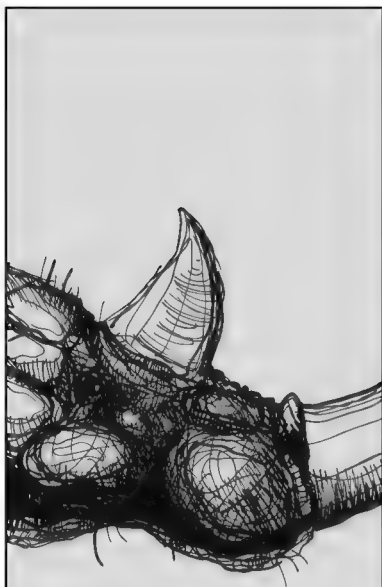
What
a beauty!







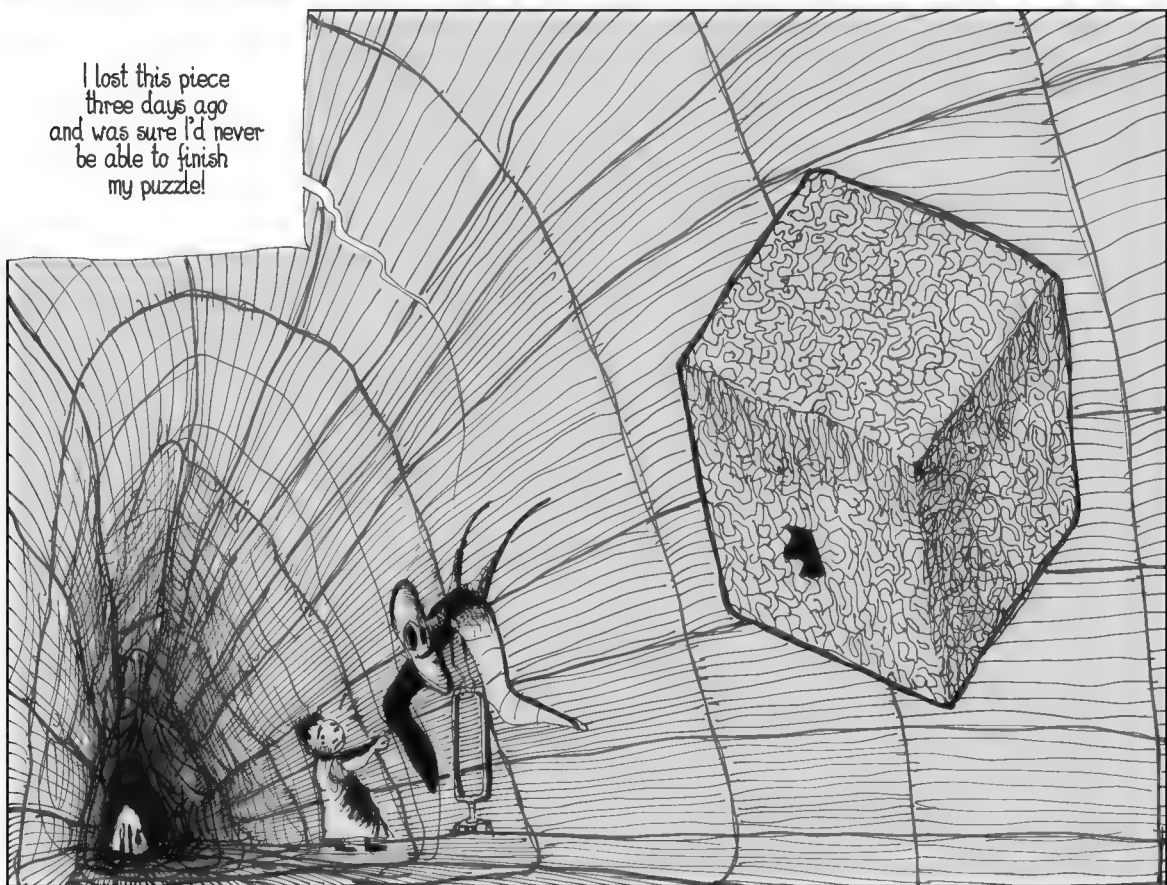
Please reach an agreement.
Are you carrying three different
things, or just one?...



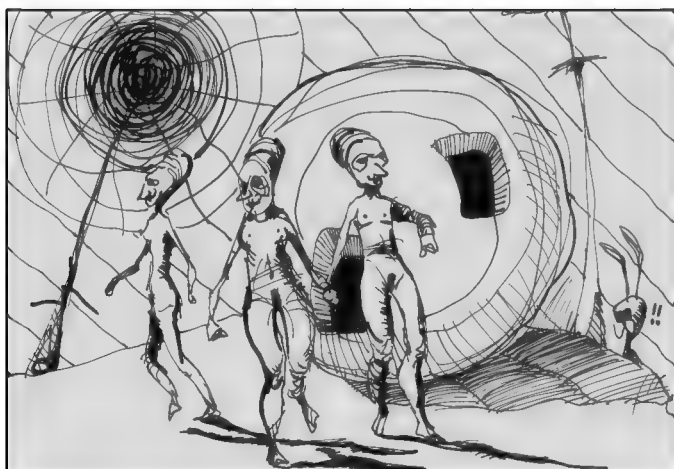
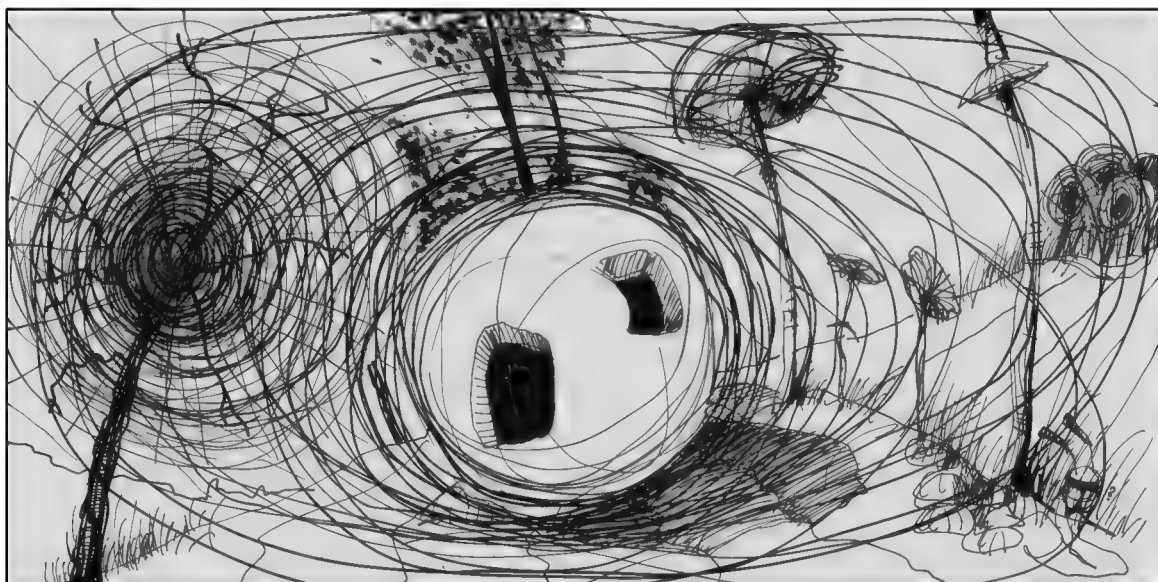
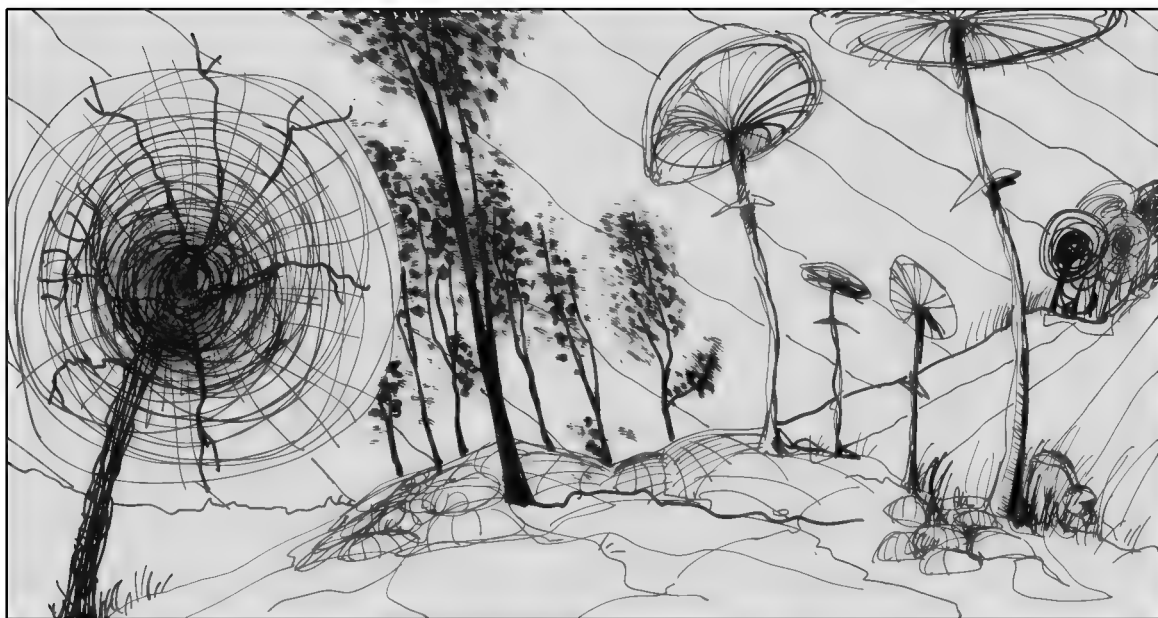
Och! That's incredible!
Almost impossible!

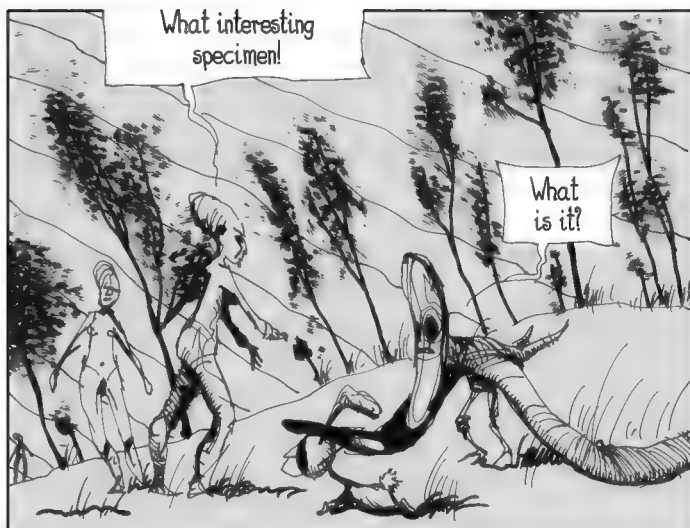
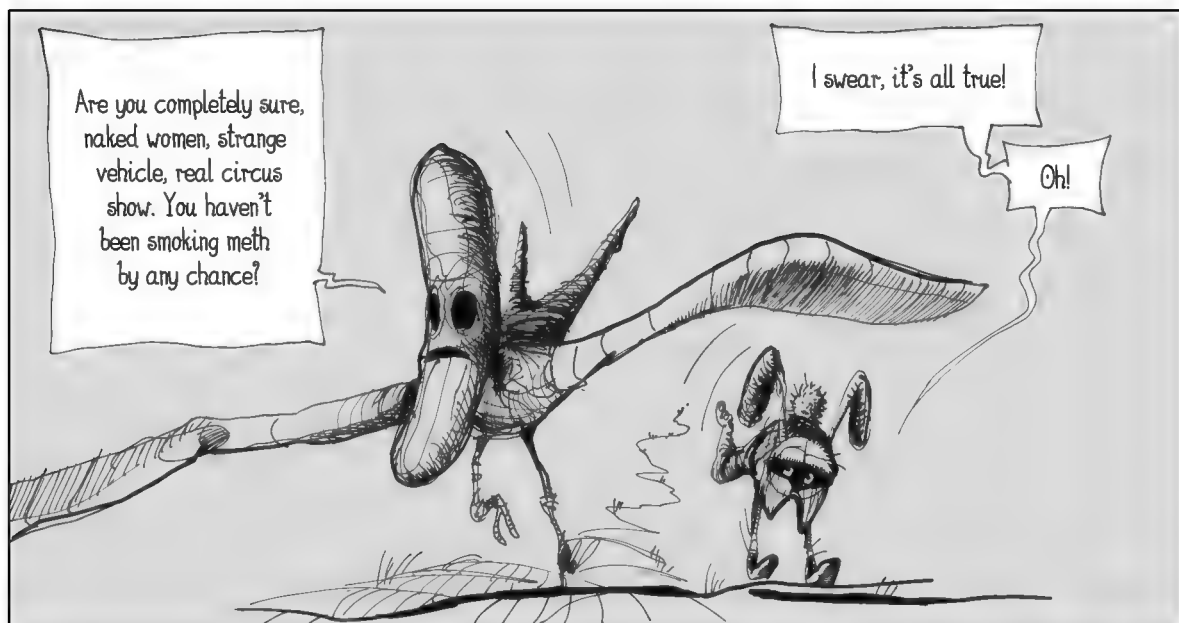


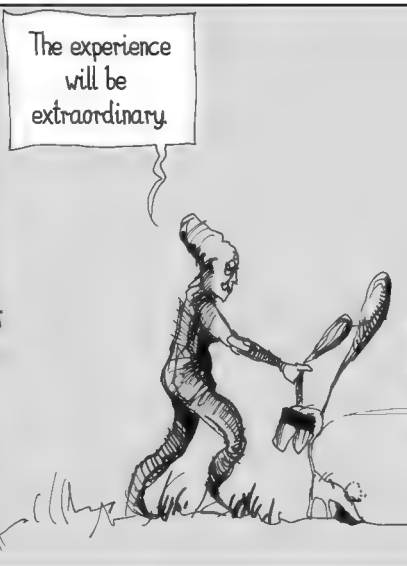
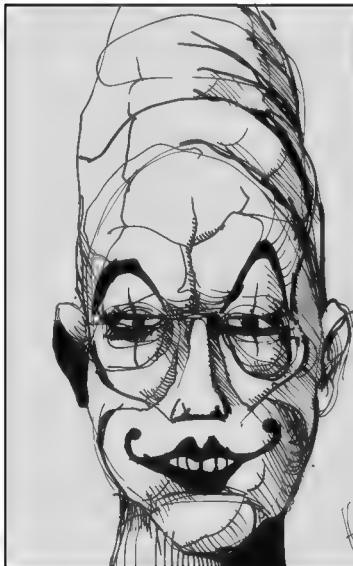
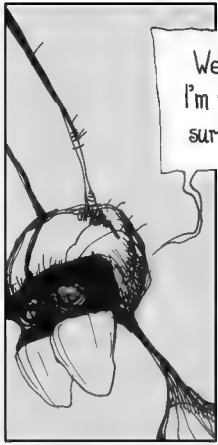
I lost this piece
three days ago
and was sure I'd never
be able to finish
my puzzle!









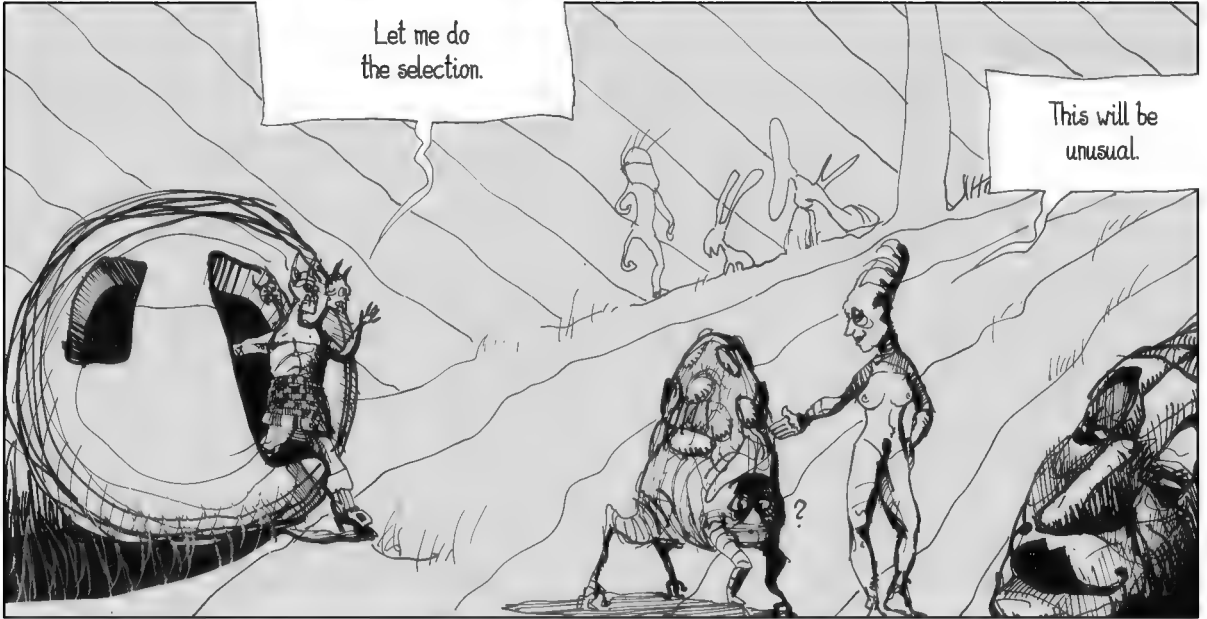




GRRRAAWL!



Let me do
the selection.



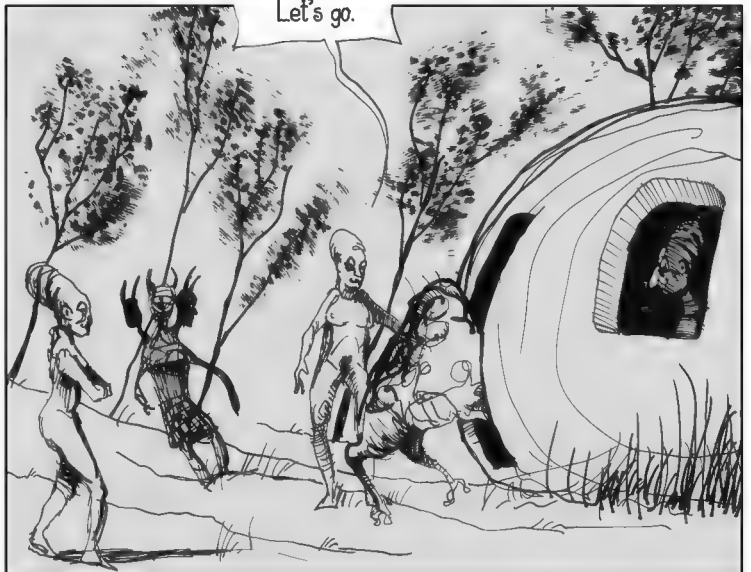
This will be
unusual.

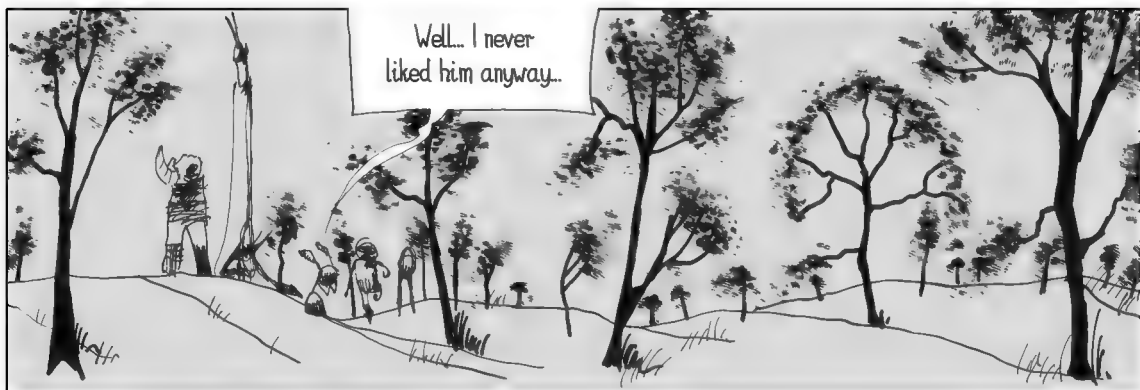
This one
will do.

Interesting
creature.

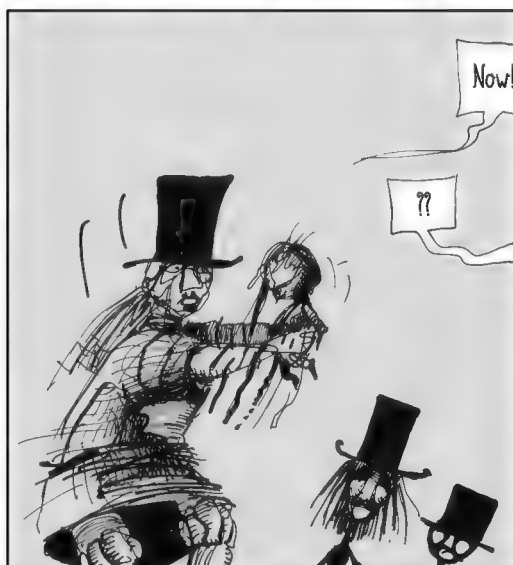


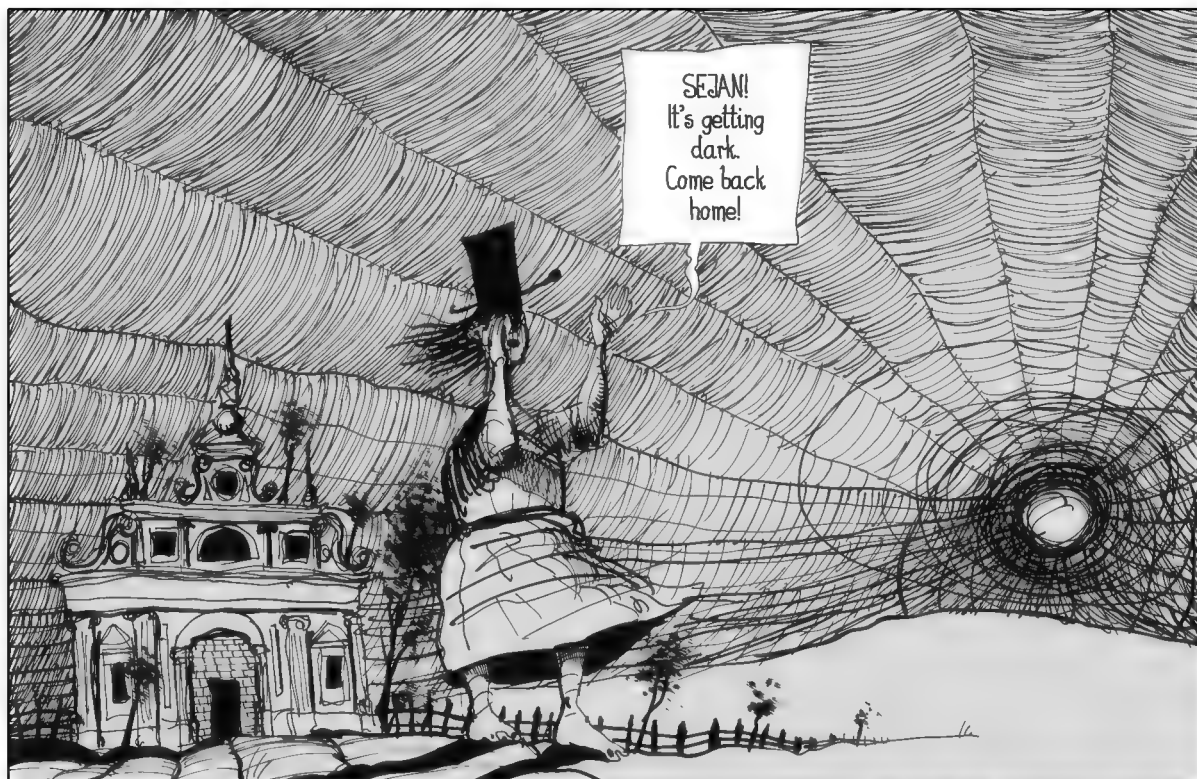
Let's go.



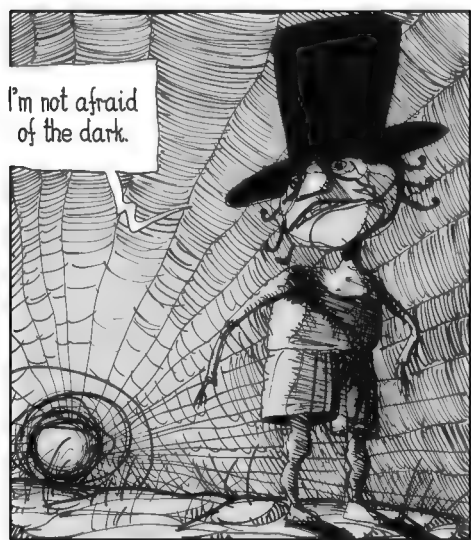








SEJAN!
It's getting
dark.
Come back
home!



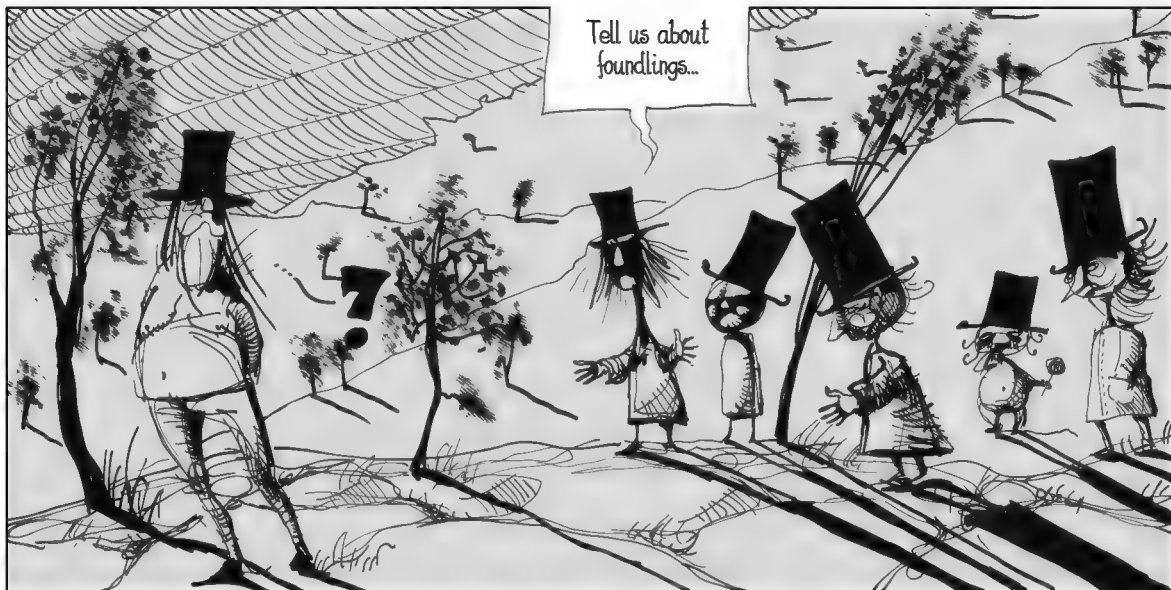
I'm not afraid
of the dark.



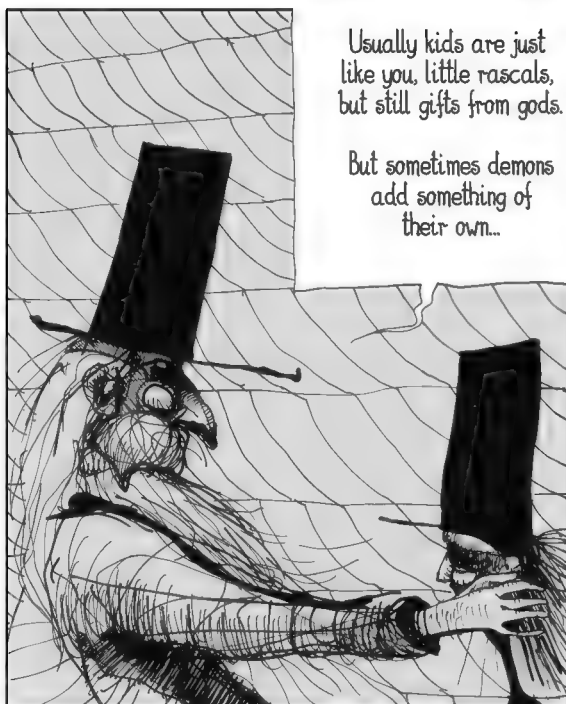
Who said, that
we were afraid of it?



Come on.

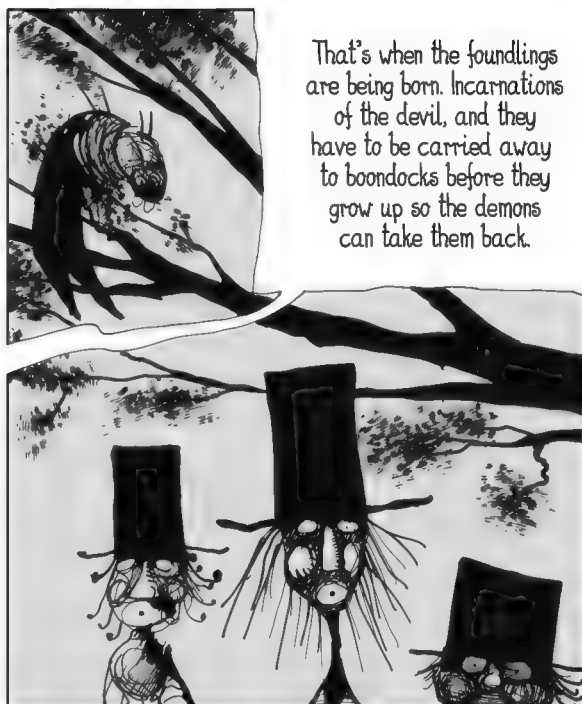


Tell us about foundlings...



Usually kids are just like you, little rascals, but still gifts from gods.

But sometimes demons add something of their own...

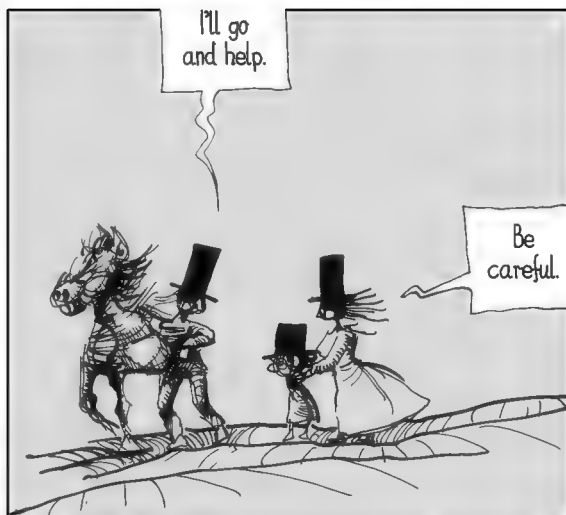
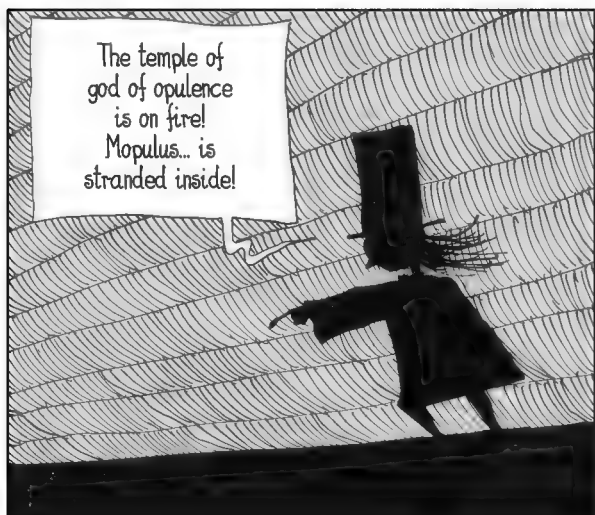


That's when the foundlings are being born. Incarnations of the devil, and they have to be carried away to boondocks before they grow up so the demons can take them back.



But don't tell at home that I told you this story, your parents will say I'm scaring children.

Now tell us about dragons!!





Sejan...



Who's there?

It's us, your brothers.
You didn't know you
had brothers? Well,
unfortunately we were
separated.
Come play with us.



Mom forbids me
going into the forest
by myself.



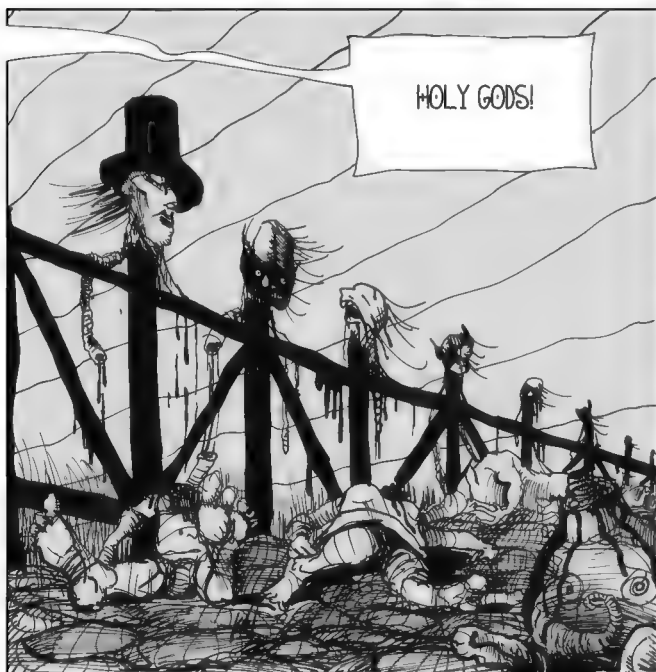
You won't be alone.
You'll be with us.

You're not afraid
of the dark, are you?

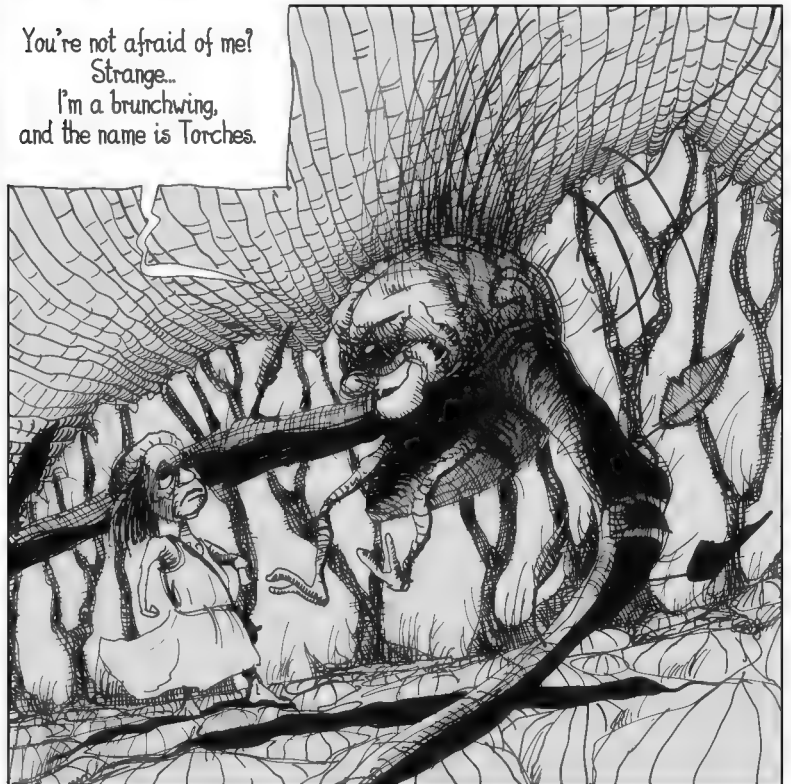
Darkness is our friend.



Yes...
A friend...



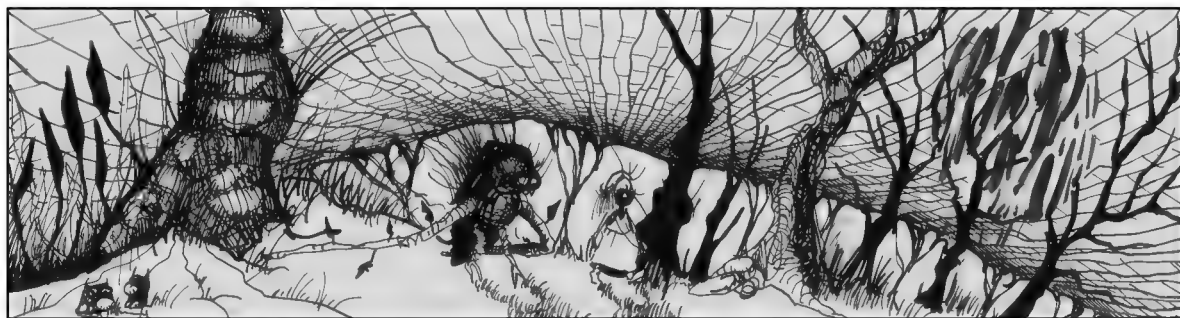




I'm Uj'nale and I'm
travelling to
the Green Hillside.

If you know how...

Ho, ho! I know exactly where
the Green Hillside is. If you
want me to I'll lead you there.



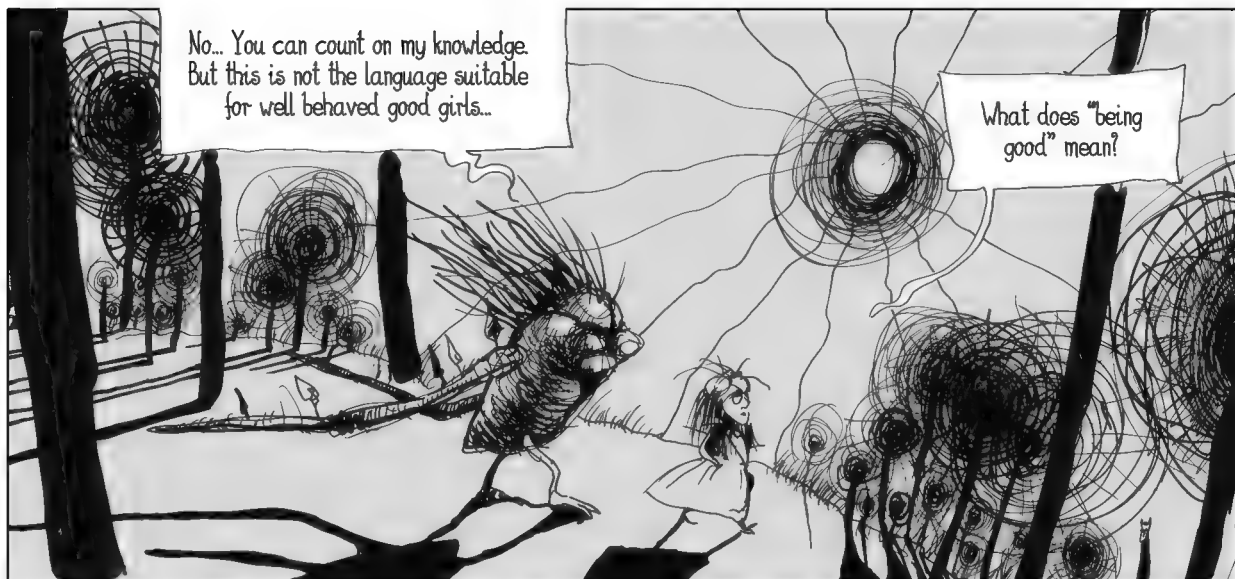
It's a beautiful forest,
but not for human
children.

They should stay
at home and help
their mothers peel
the Penkiv, not look
for the Green
Hillside.

You probably don't know
where it is, you wise guy
and you want to back out.

No... You can count on my knowledge.
But this is not the language suitable
for well behaved good girls...

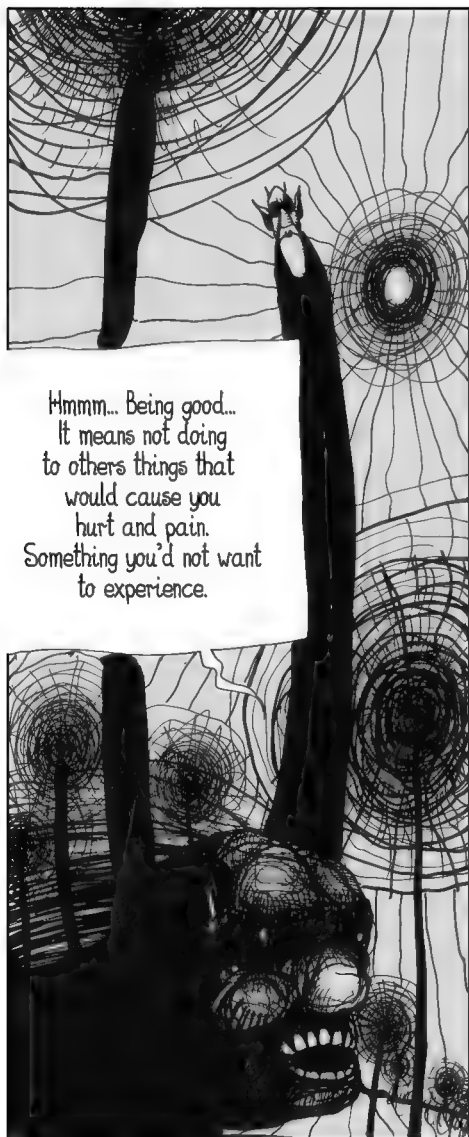
What does "being
good" mean?



And if you're
a masochist?



Hmmm... Being good...
It means not doing
to others things that
would cause you
hurt and pain.
Something you'd not want
to experience.

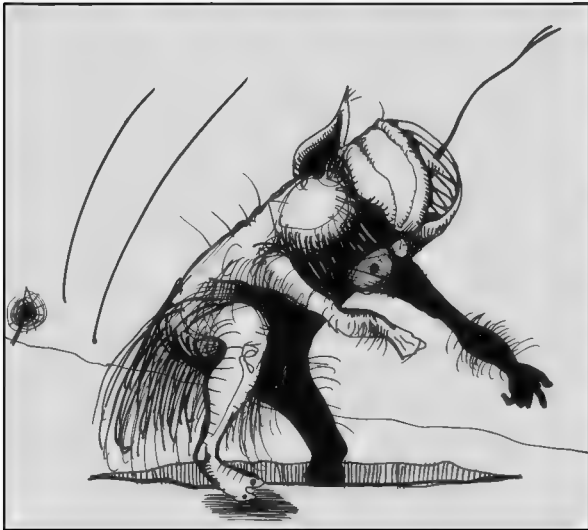
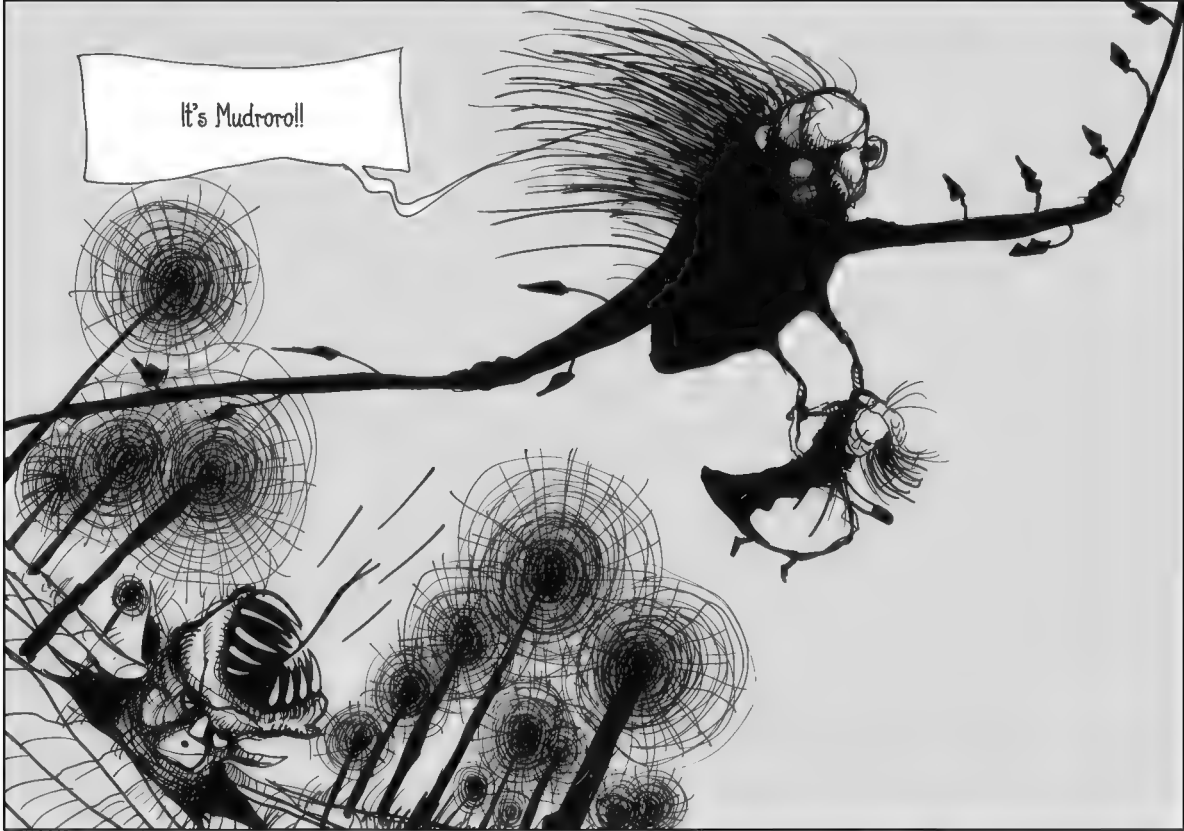


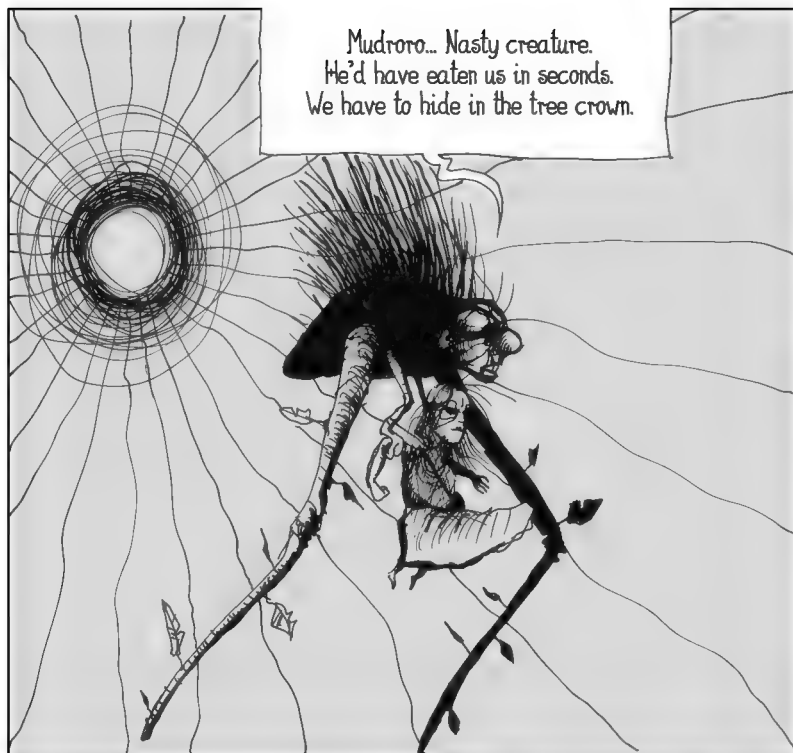
I don't know what
a masochist is, but I'm
still standing by
what I said.



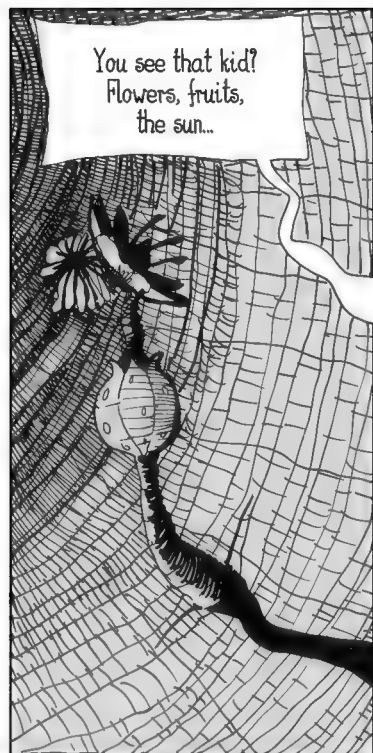
?... Wait...



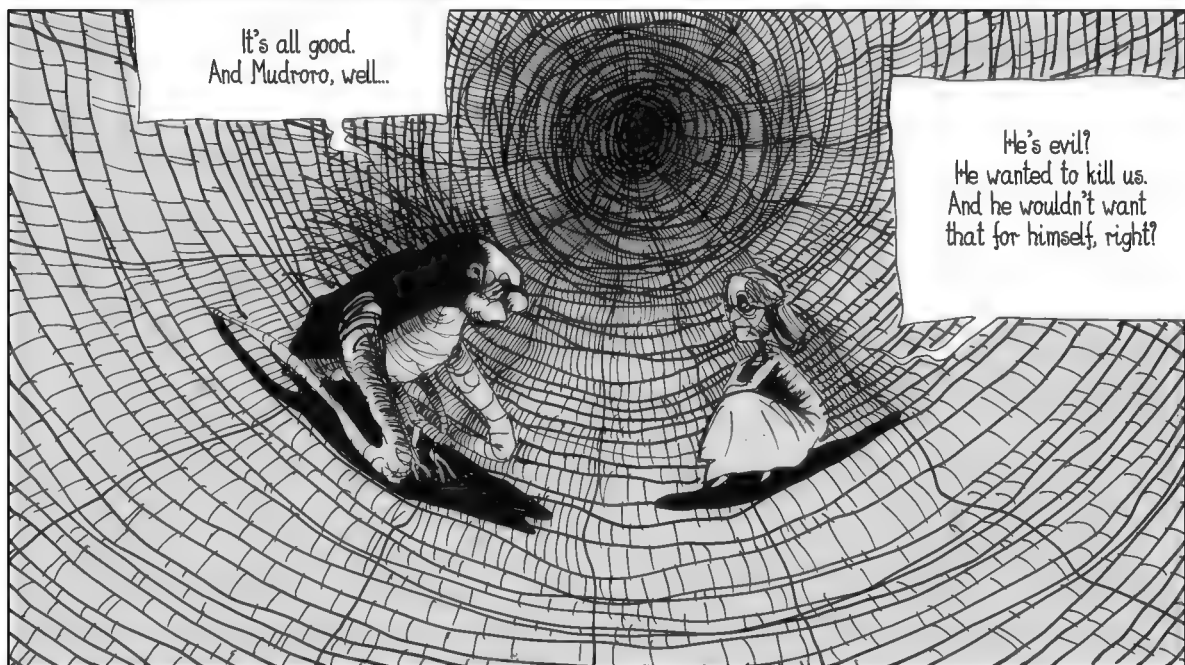




Mudroro... Nasty creature.
He'd have eaten us in seconds.
We have to hide in the tree crown.



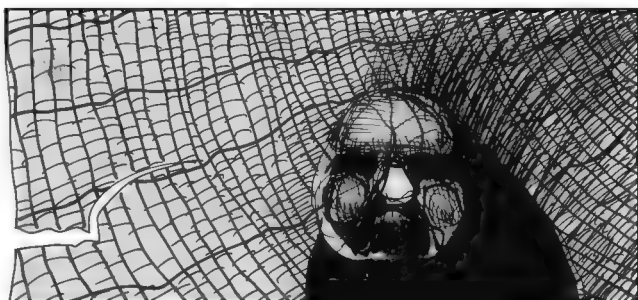
You see that kid?
Flowers, fruits,
the sun...



It's all good.
And Mudroro, well...

He's evil?
He wanted to kill us.
And he wouldn't want
that for himself, right?

No. He did what animals have to do.
He's killing to survive. He's thoughtless
and doesn't recognize evil.
It's us, creatures sapiens, who have to
remember that we shouldn't do evil,
because only us can see the distinction
between good and evil.



You're such
a smart bird,
aren't you.

For a kid without home
and relatives you sure
are audacious.

Look around you.
This is the best place
and time for such
disputes.
Besides, I didn't come
up with all this
knowledge. I'm only
quoting.

Quote some more!

How come lack of family
is supposed to be depressing?

Maybe I got rid of them
myself?...

Doesn't matter. I'll tell you
about who's evil, and you
just listen, because it's
a once in a lifetime
opportunity for you.
All animals, depending on
their specification have
a special code.
Let's say, when a wolf
is defeated in a fight...

... he exposes his throat and
rolls over his back like a puppy.
He recognizes being inferior,
being weaker and beaten. That's
enough for other wolves to stop
attacking him.

All animals have some kind
of gesture which prevents
extinction.

The only exception is humans.
By your standards being
defenseless, weak, sensible
is an open invitation for others
to end the misery.

And that's what's evil.

I didn't
understand...



Let me rephrase it for you.
You know fairytales, right?
They always end well?

Well, I guess...

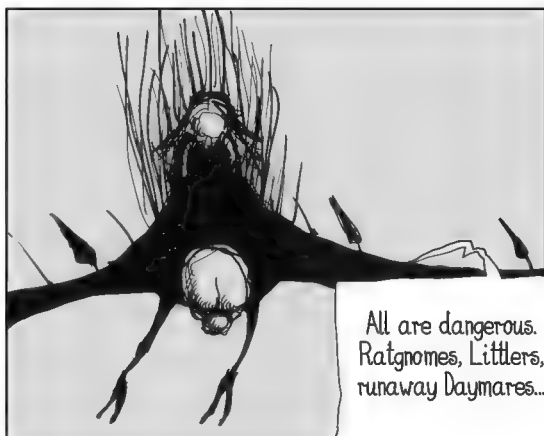
Exactly. And life is a fairytale
narrated by the devil.
Very evil fairytale.



Torches?...

Yes?

What other
deadly animals
are in this
forest?



All are dangerous.
Ratgnomes, Littlers,
runaway Daymares...



But the worst are
the flying brunches...

Oh really?



Yeah, they have
brunches in place
of wings and they
drink little kid's
blood.

That's so
interesting!

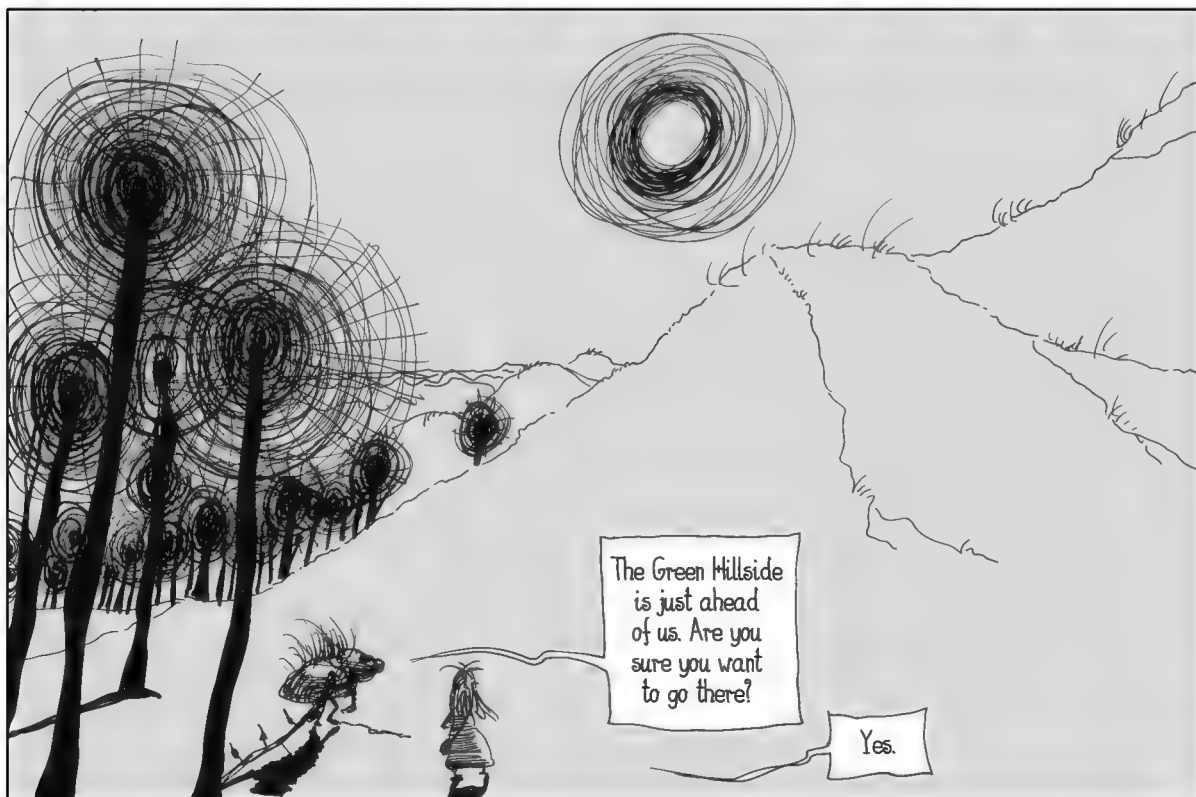
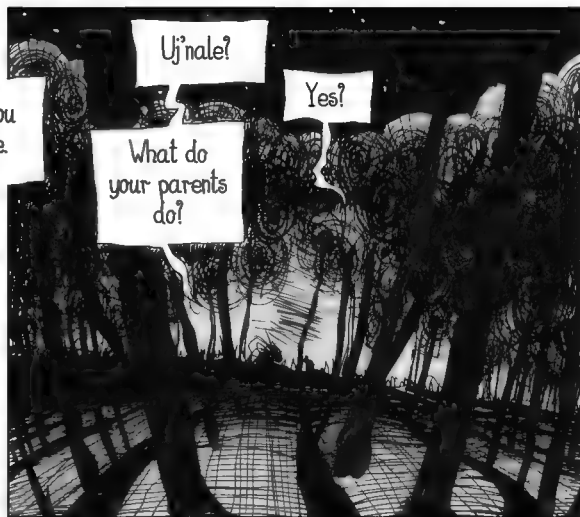


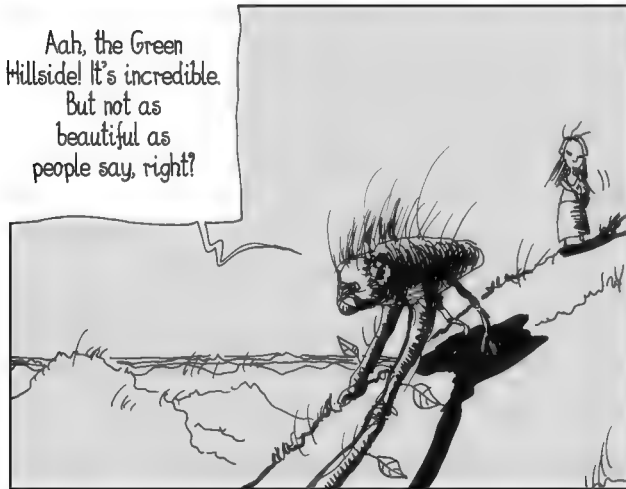
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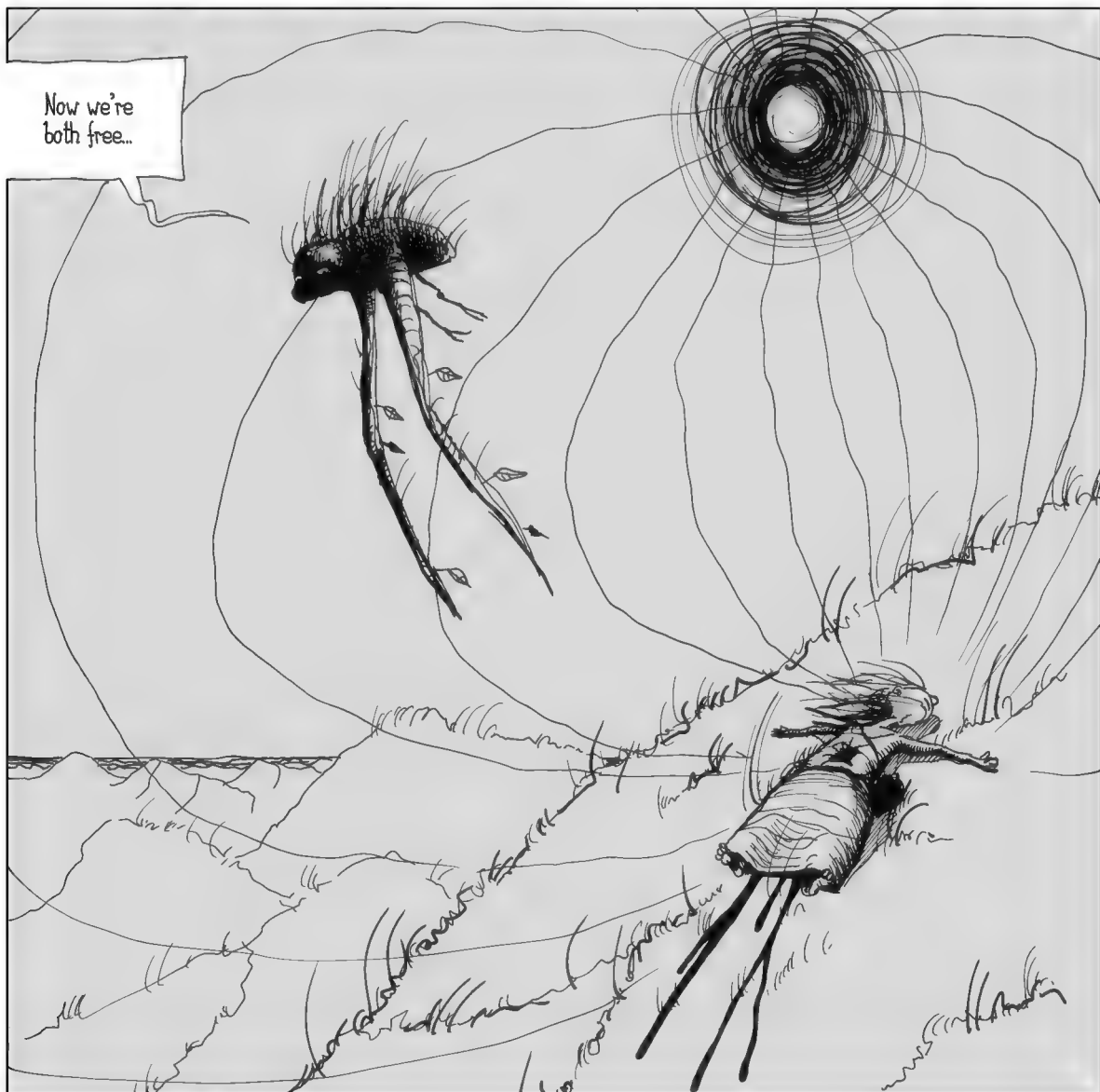


Where did
you get this?

He was just walking
around. I caught
him and... Slash!

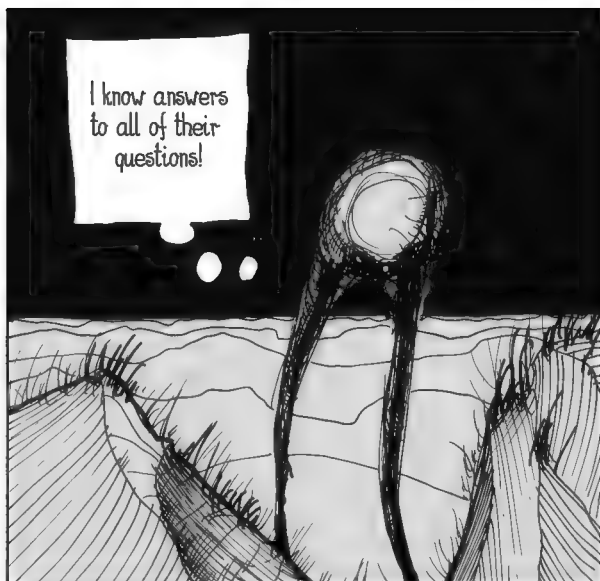


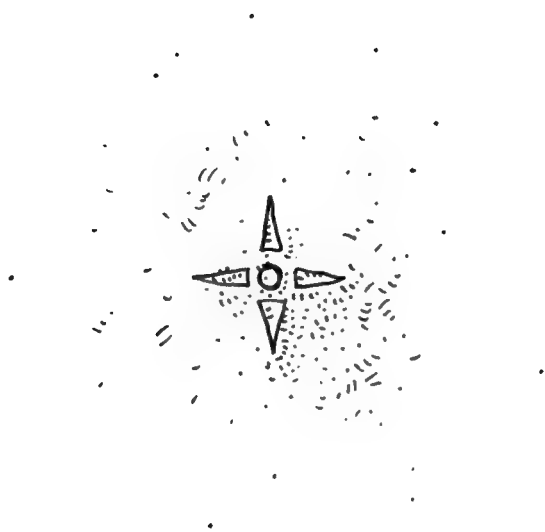


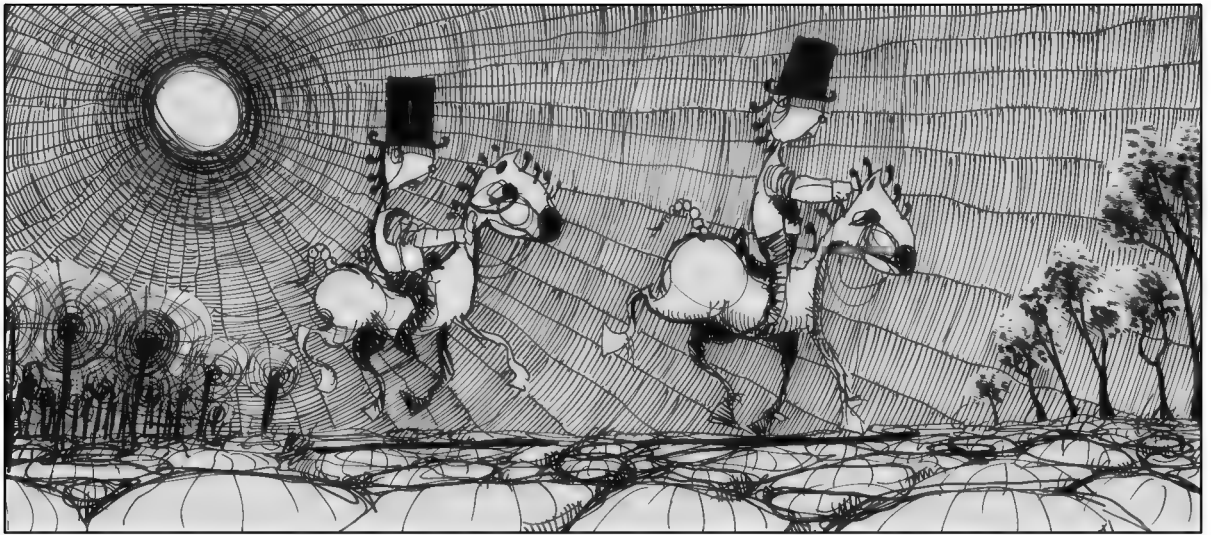




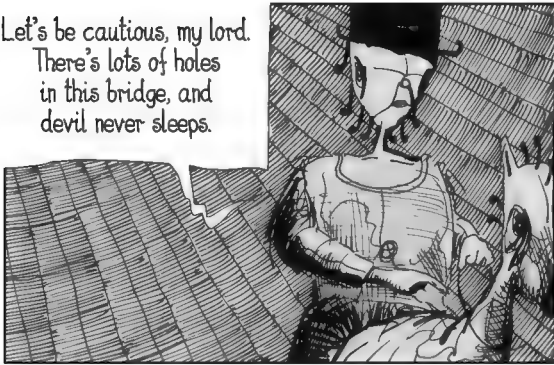




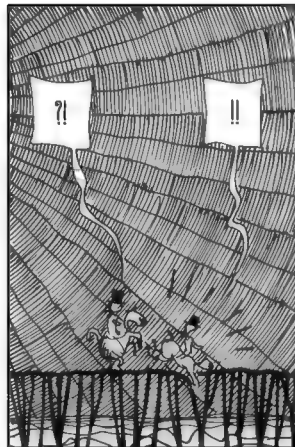
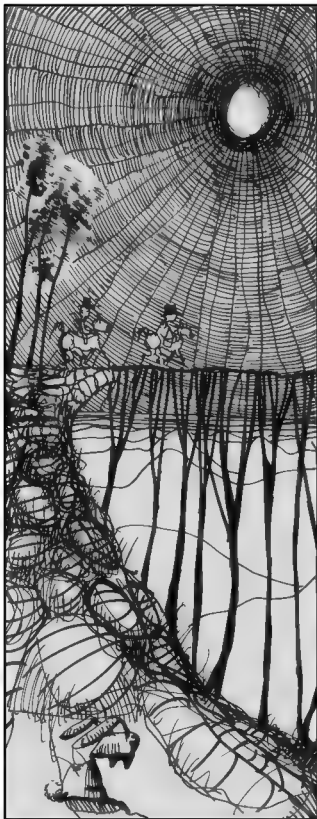
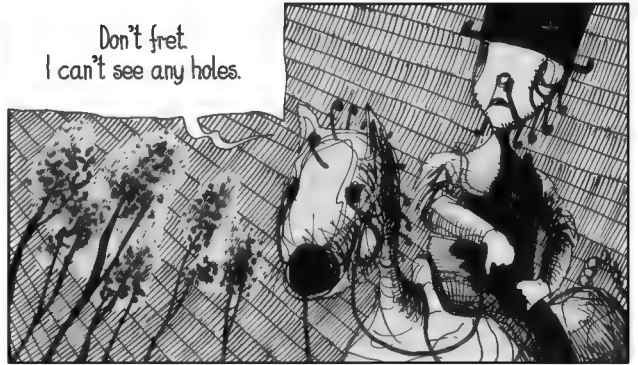




Let's be cautious, my lord.
There's lots of holes
in this bridge, and
devil never sleeps.

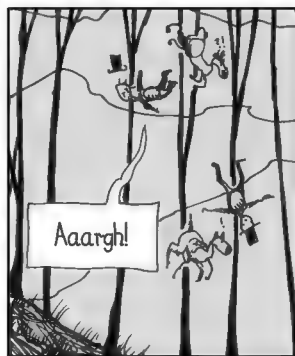


Don't fret.
I can't see any holes.

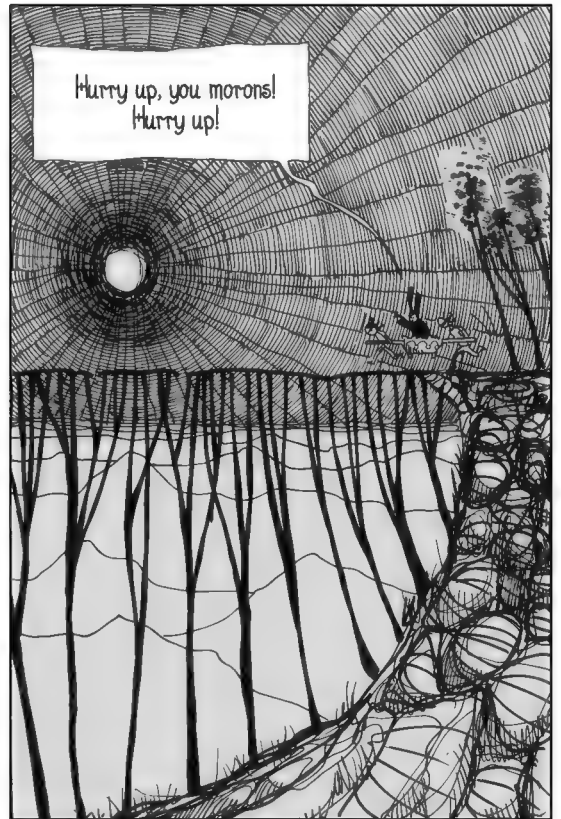


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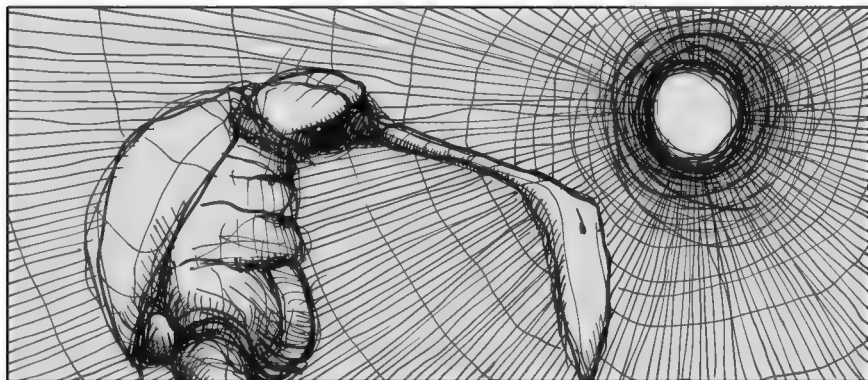
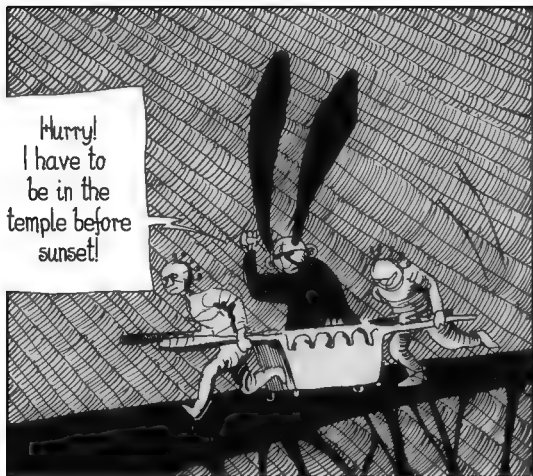
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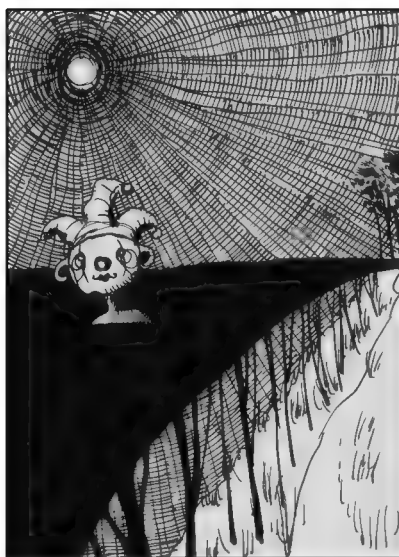


Aaargh!



Hurry up, you morons!
Hurry up!





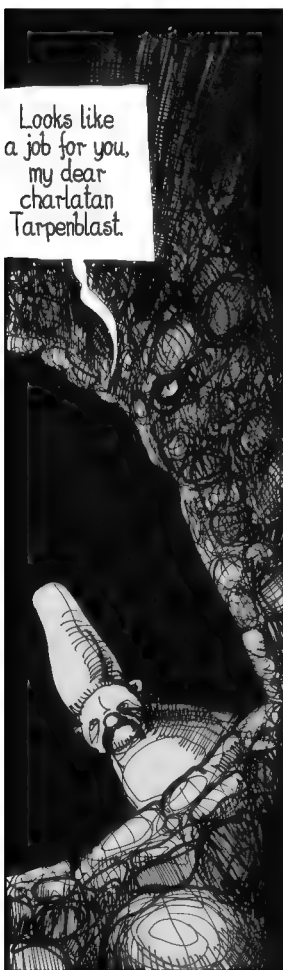




Another one...

Something
is taking
them.

Or they rise
by themselves.



Looks like
a job for you,
my dear
charlatan
Tarpenblast.



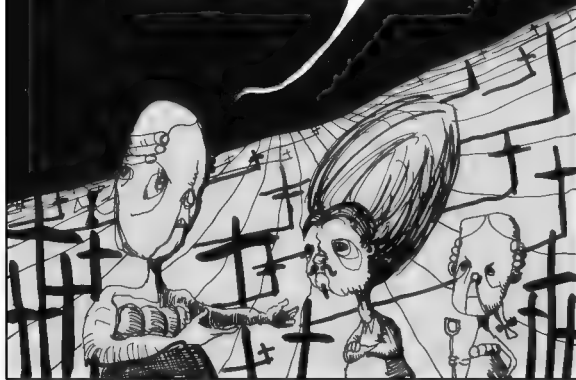
Catch these ghouls.
Entire city of
Mylien is counting
on you.

I'd prefer you send a boy
to Ariddleft to summon
a priest of Volgrum
the Great.



Nonsense!
You're a proper magician
and few ghouls are not
a challenge for you, ain't
that the truth!
Or, what's even more
possible - common thieves.

And isn't that a shame to
go to Aridcleft with something
simple like this?
Who would even believe!...



But...



Wait!...



Can you see anything,
my dear baldy tail?
I can't... They should
put a better watch
on these tumuli
instead of
dragging me all
the way here...



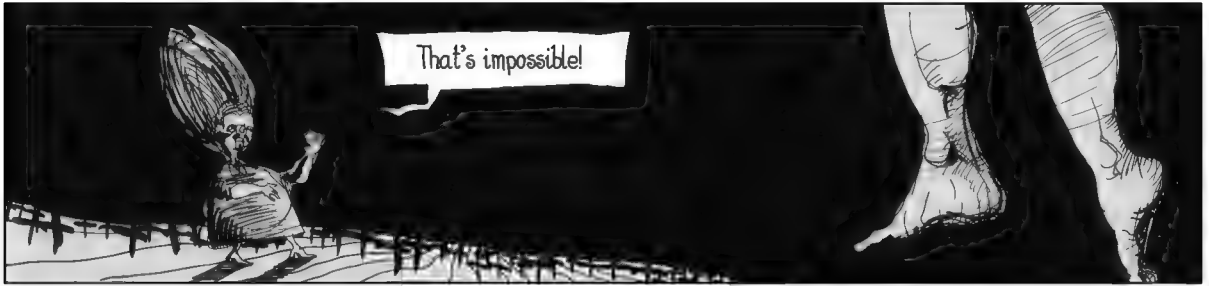
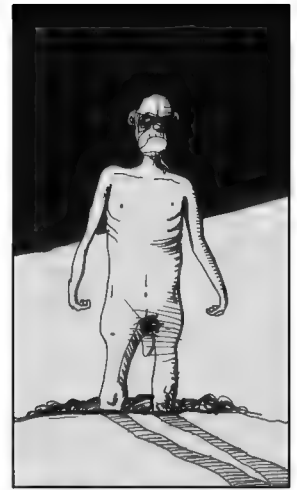
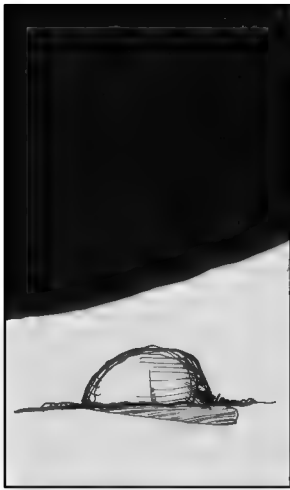
They're keeping an eye
right now, for sure, but
outside of the holy
grounds devoted to
the dead.

They're probably all
drunk by now, as per
usual, and we're
freezing our butts off
over here.



WHAT ?...





That's impossible!



Don't try
to stop me.
I have to go.

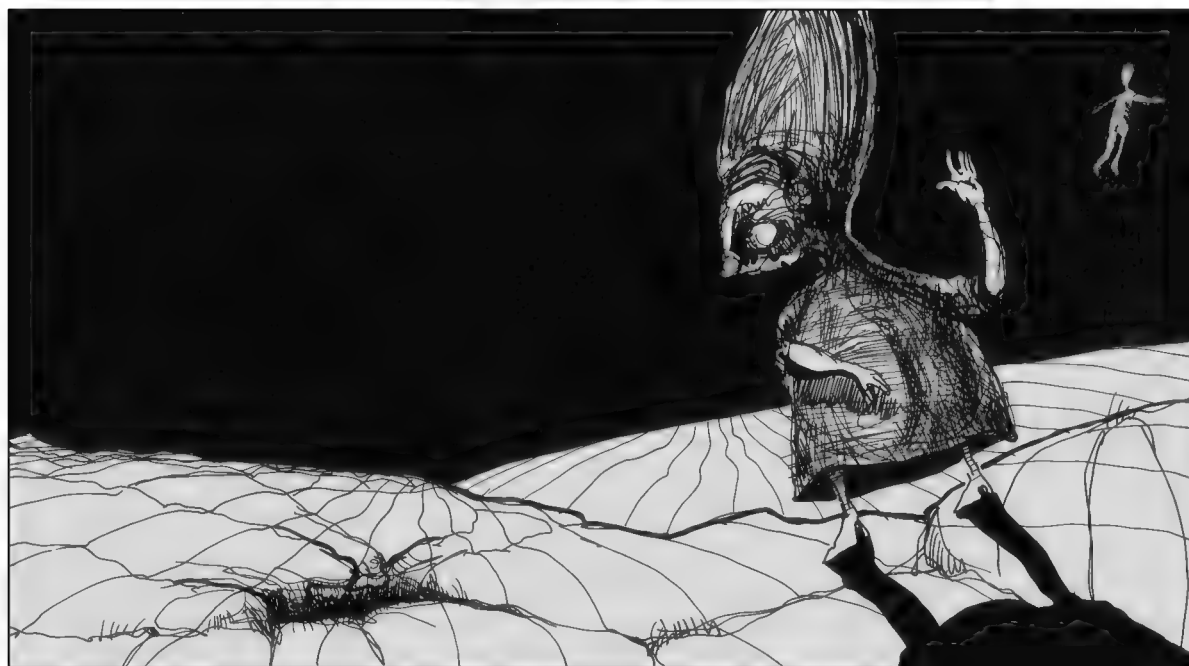


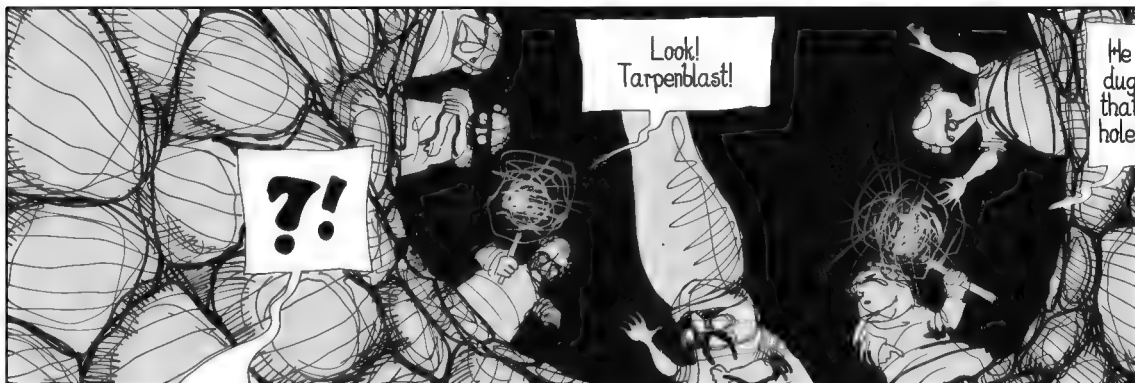
Go where?! Wait!

You don't understand.
The heart of mother earth
is beating too loud.
I will now float
in the moonlight.



Lay down in the hole
and I promise, you'll feel
what I feel soon enough.





Goddamn thief!
Sneaky as a fox,
but this fresh
grave betrayed
him!...

He dug it so
quickly!
It's barely
after
midnight.

Let's hang
the blasphemer!

We should
burn him!

Yes, burn him
so he won't be
able to come
back to haunt
after death.

WAIT!!!

Burn until
there's nothing
left.

Burn!

Burn
to ashes!

Looks like
the promise
will be
broken...

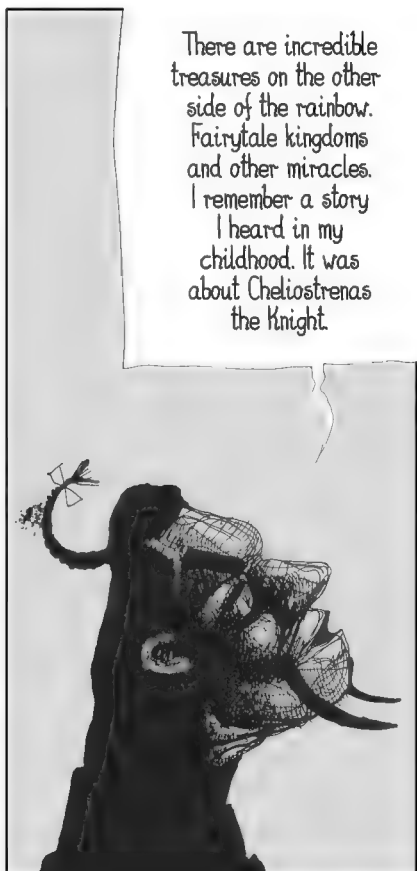


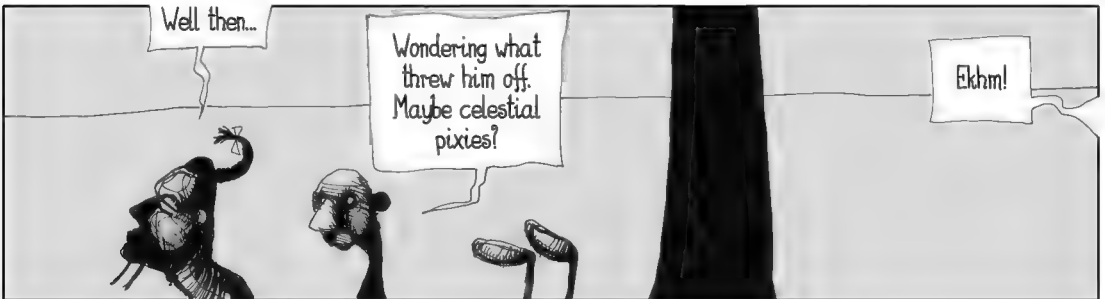
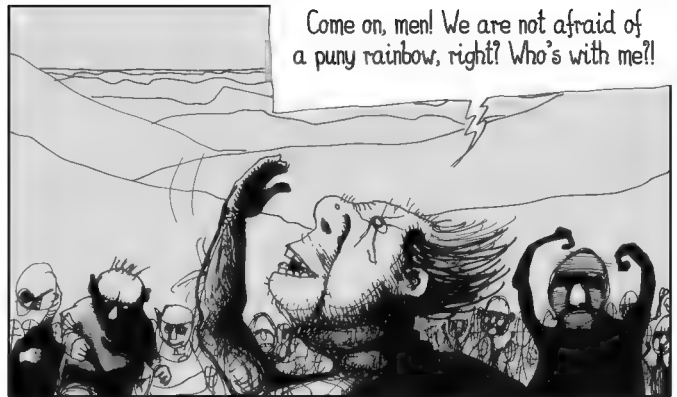


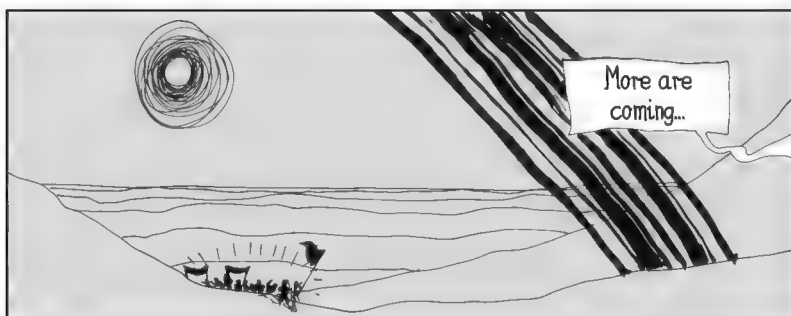
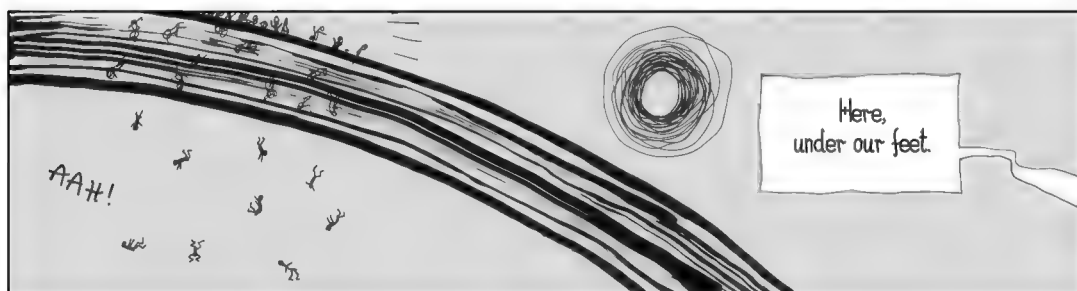
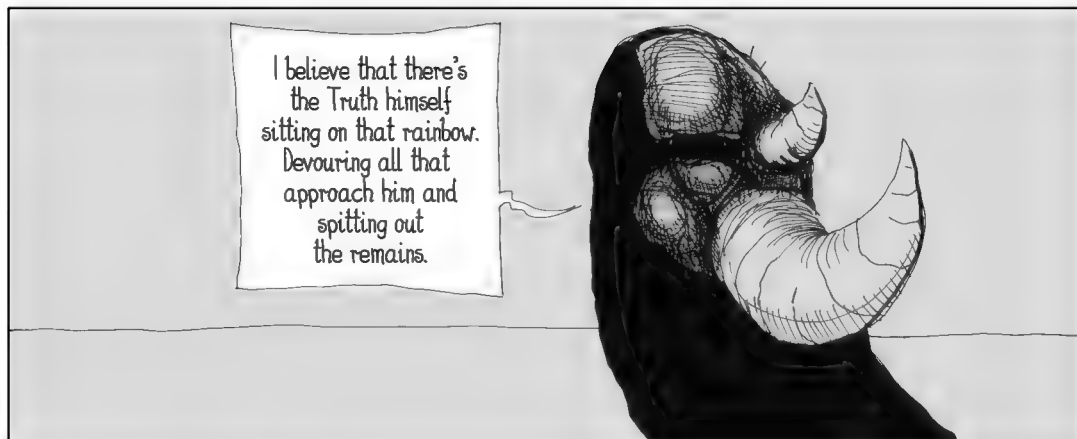
Go on then,
Binerhim.
Get on it.



There are incredible
treasures on the other
side of the rainbow.
Fairytale kingdoms
and other miracles.
I remember a story
I heard in my
childhood. It was
about Cheliostrenas
the Knight.











Phew.

Basilisk is up
on the mountain.
I could swear he's
near the slope of Crow.

I hope
nobody
on the
coombs
heard
him. Gods
protect
them...

I can't grasp why are you
all so afraid of.
Anyway, I heard that there
is an easy route to
Crow's peak through north?

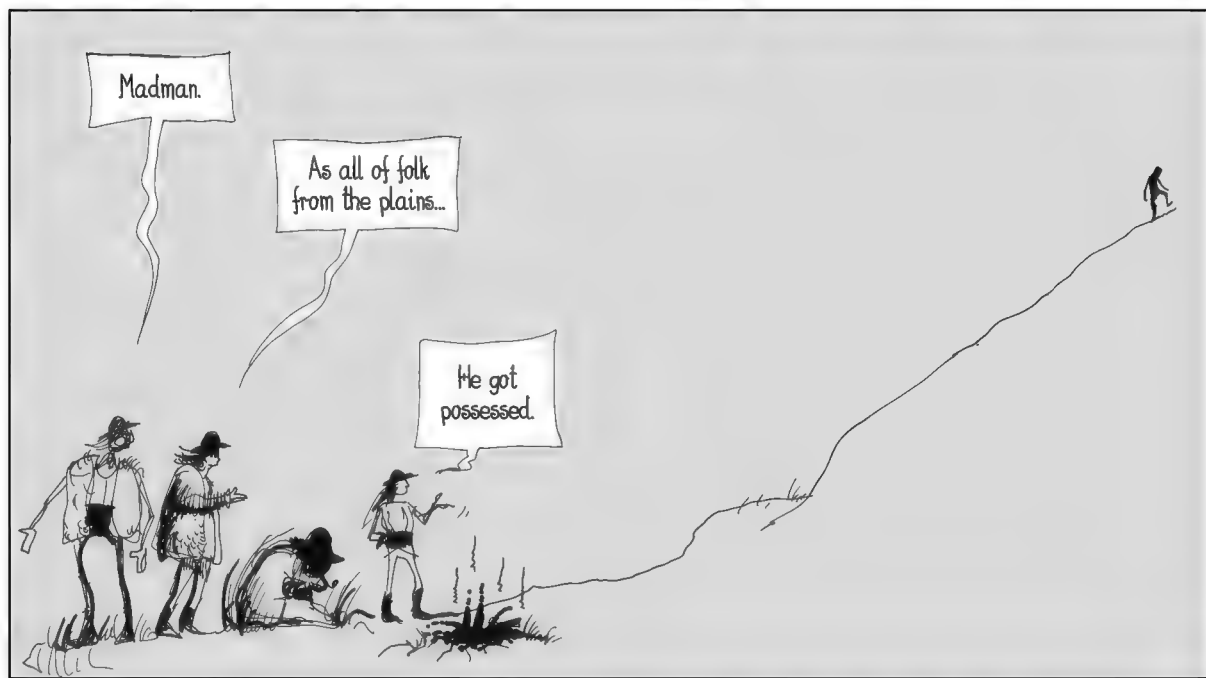
If that's your
wish - then go.
It's your life, man
from the plains.
At least wait
until the dawn.

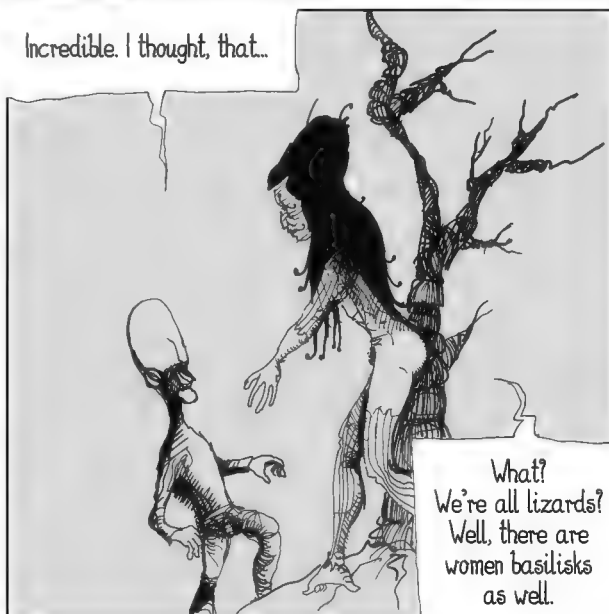
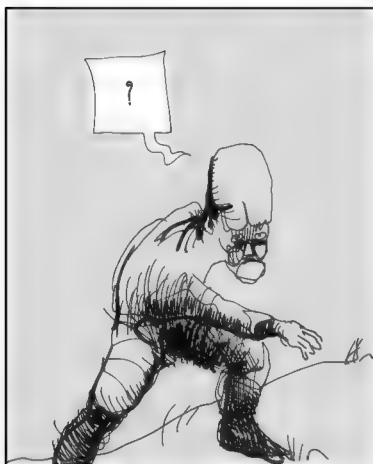
Good night.

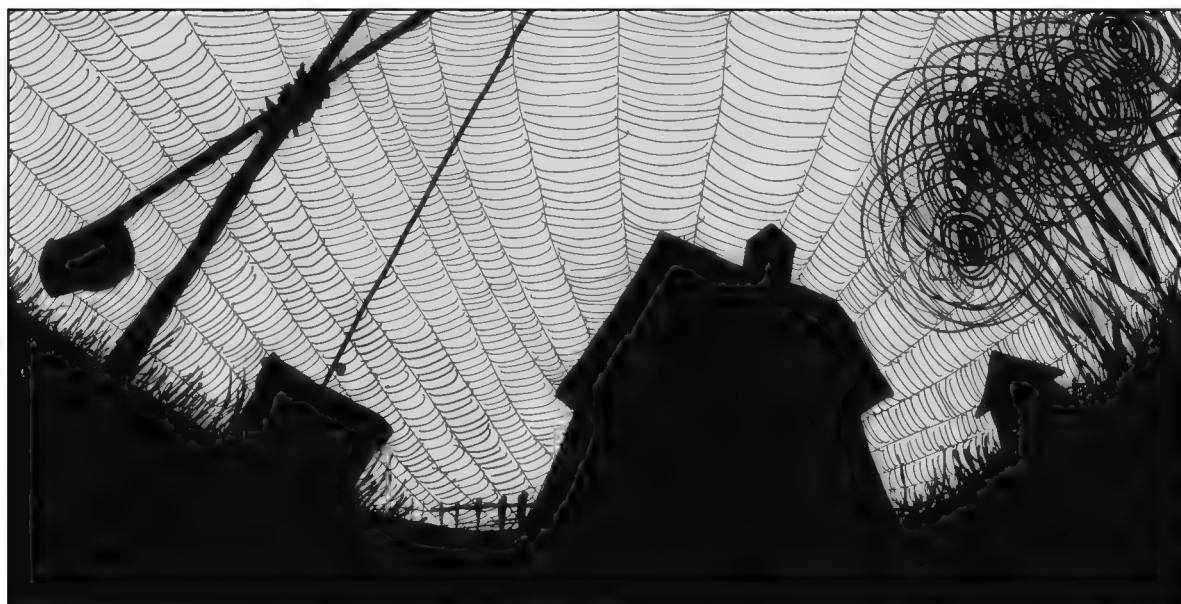
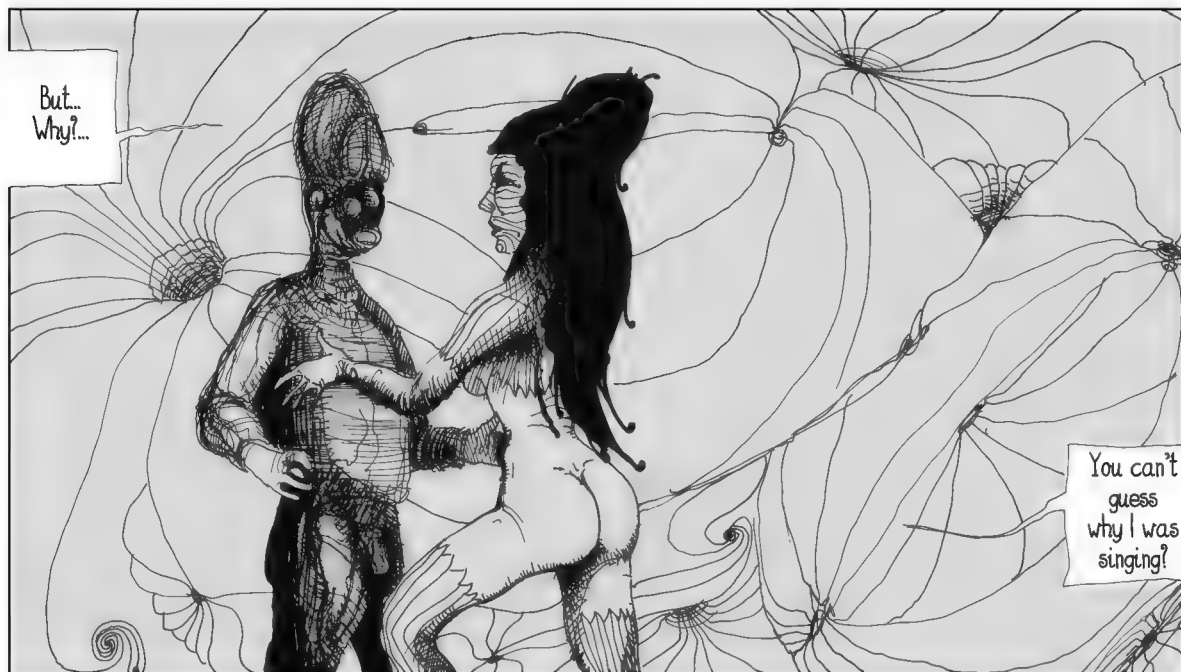
Madman.

As all of folk
from the plains...

He got
possessed.







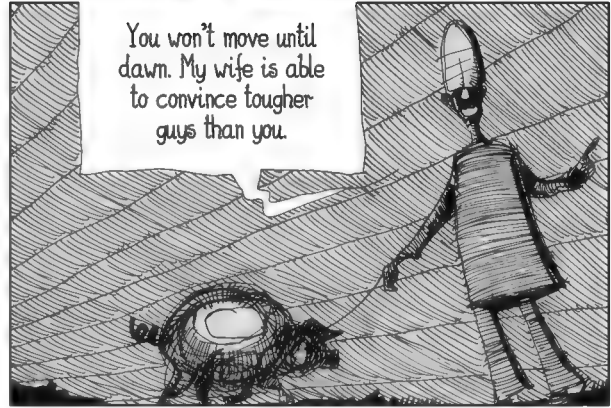


Do not move.
We will only take few
things and leave.

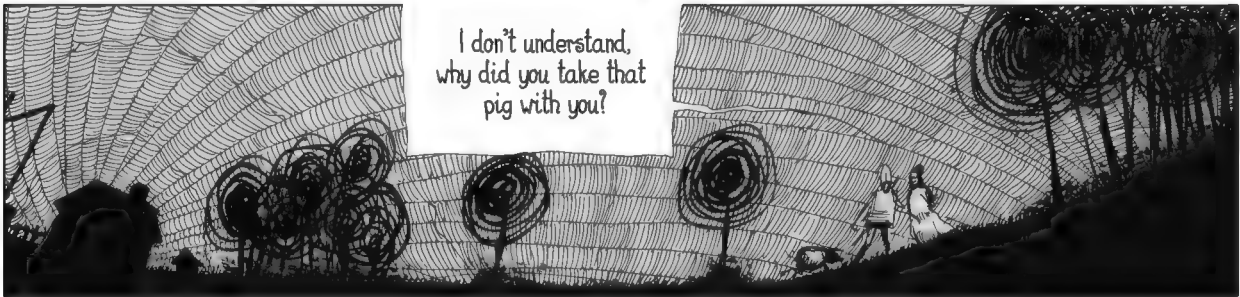
Don't try to be a hero.



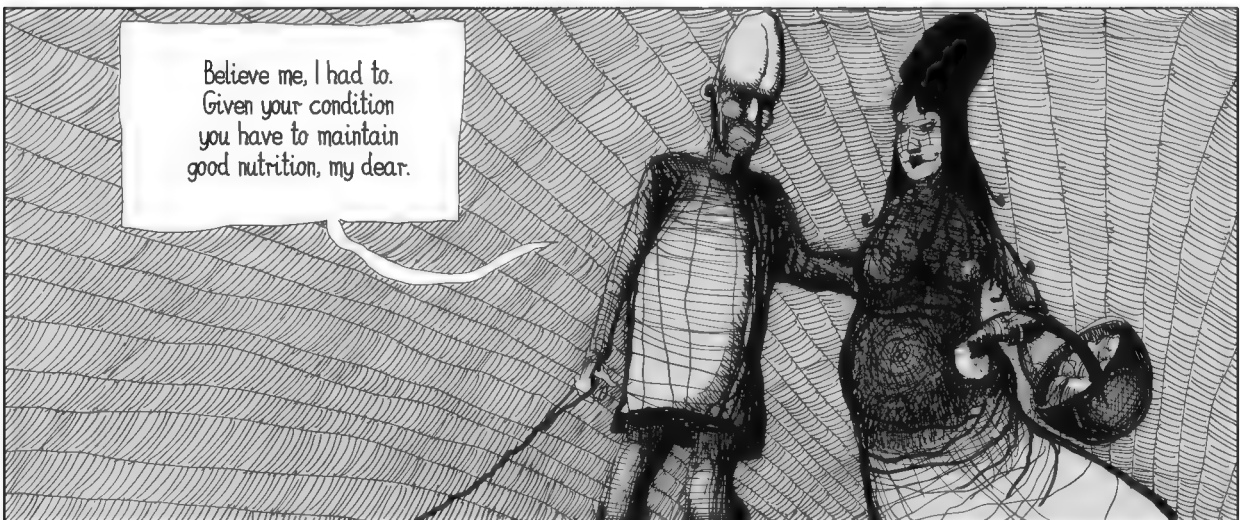
Don't
do it.



You won't move until
dawn. My wife is able
to convince tougher
guys than you.



I don't understand,
why did you take that
pig with you?



Believe me, I had to.
Given your condition
you have to maintain
good nutrition, my dear.





Frankly speaking,
I'm not exactly ready to
believe in what you're saying...



Would I run to you through
those nasty marches
and drag you out into this
dreadful rain if it
wasn't true?



I understand, that
Flounder saw
it too. But it's just...
Well...
A bit unthinkable...

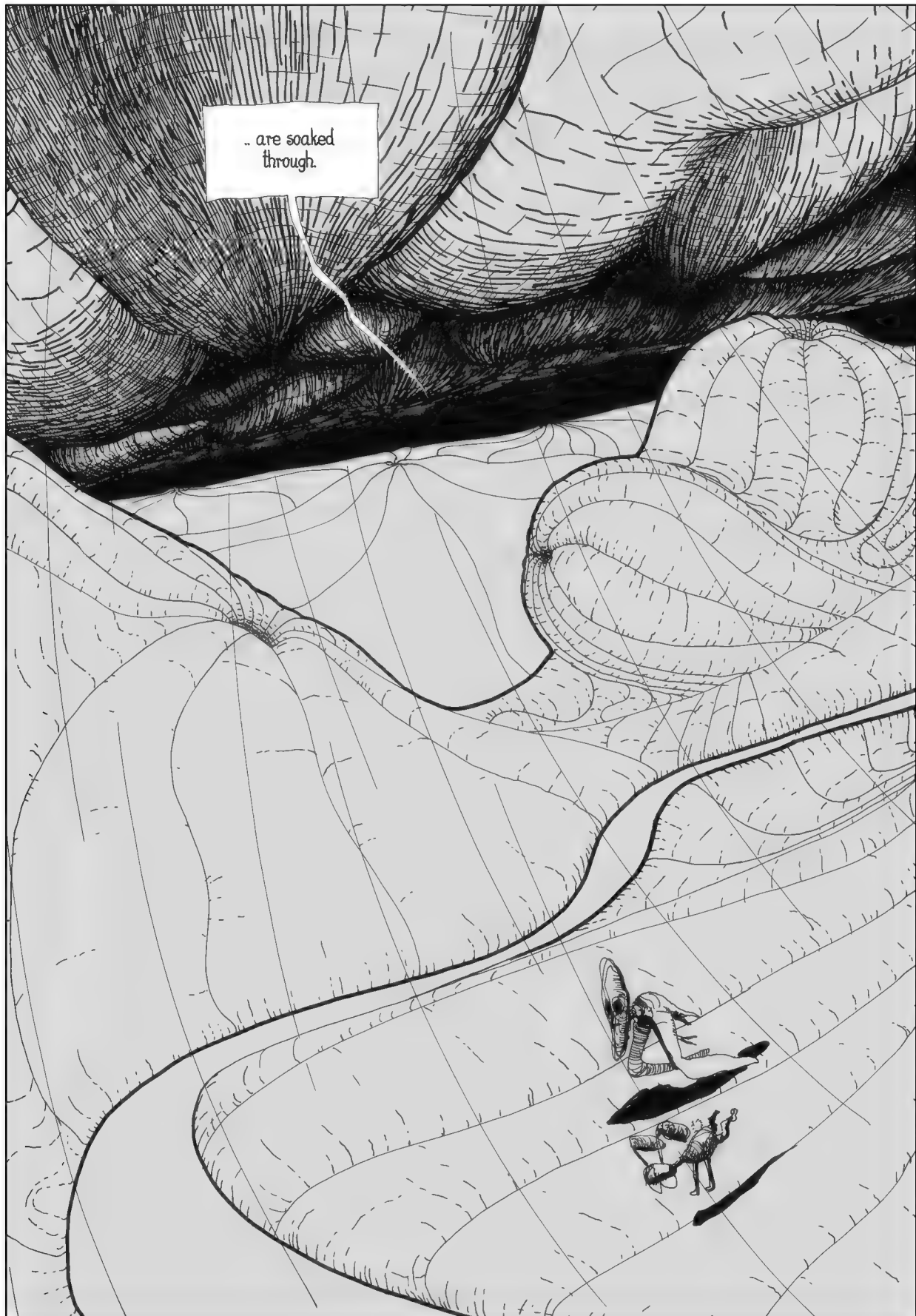


Tell that to psychic fishermen.
They were just sitting there
by the river, fishing by using
their minds and all of a sudden
THIS happens.



Well, yes, that would be
a traumatic event,
I admit. So - lead
the way, since we
already...

.. are soaked
through.

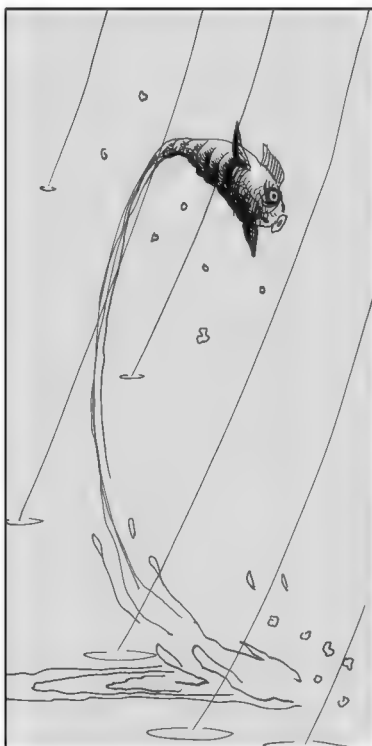
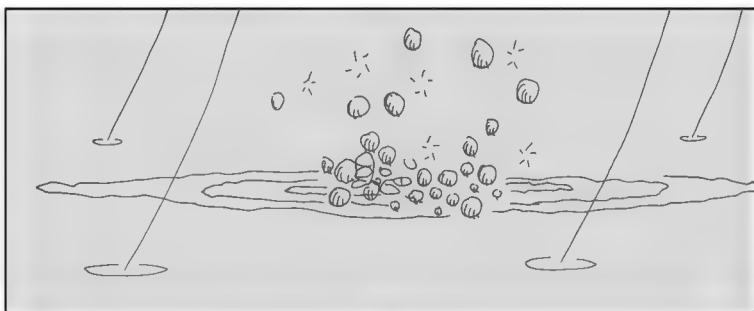
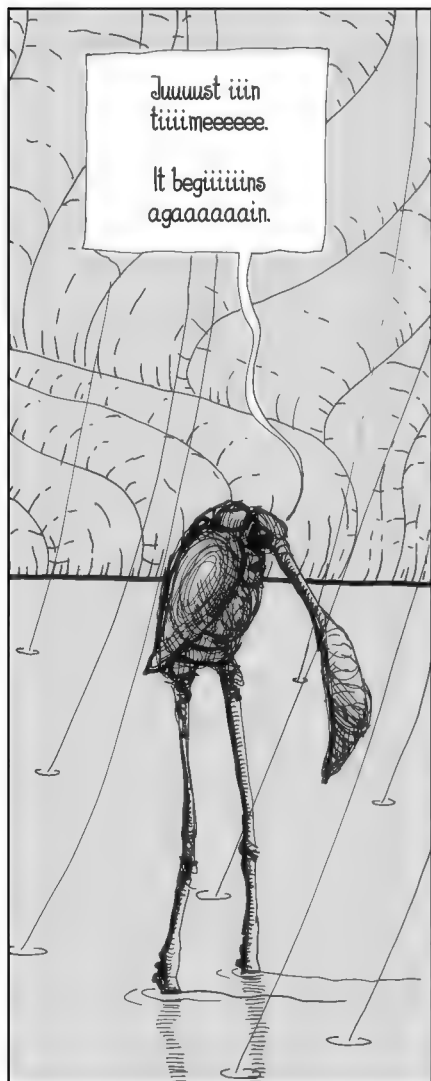


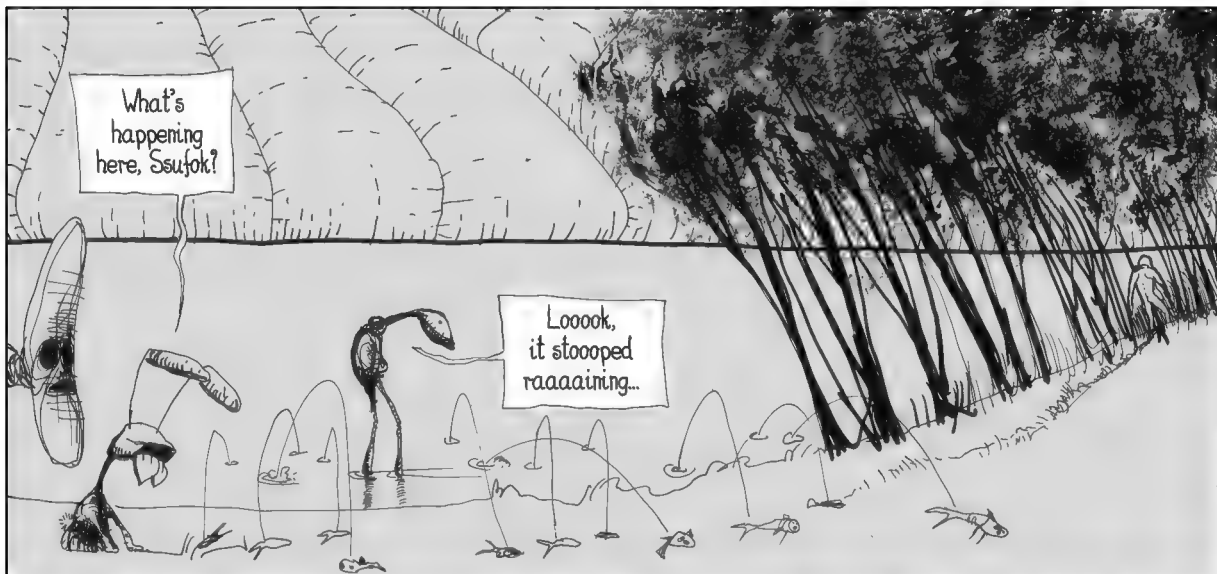
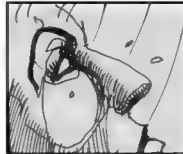
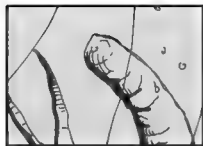
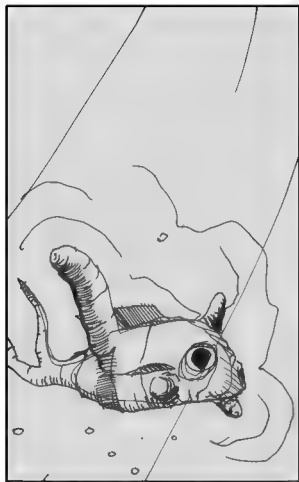
Oh, there's the Flounder!
Here's where first
batch appeared.



Juuuust iin
tiiimeeeeeee.

It begiiiiiiins
agaaaaaaain.



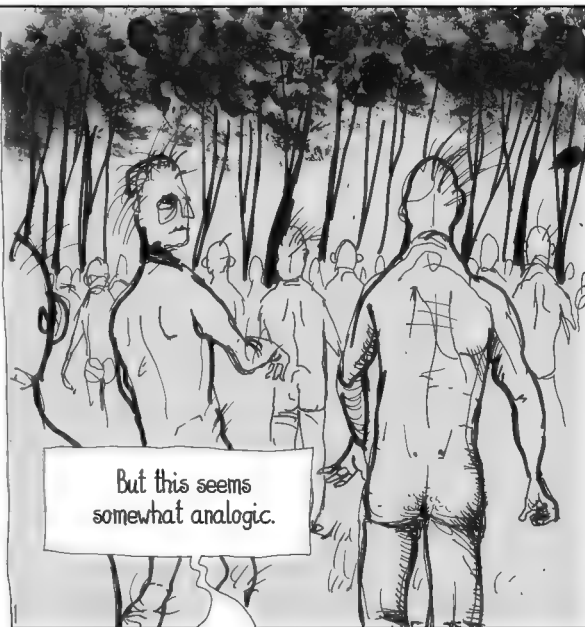


I'm not sure.
The only thing that
comes to my mind is
that nothing comes
from nothing.

Maybe this is how
people are created
in... well... wherever
they're heading to.

Maybe they're
travelling through
different dimentiones
using different forms.

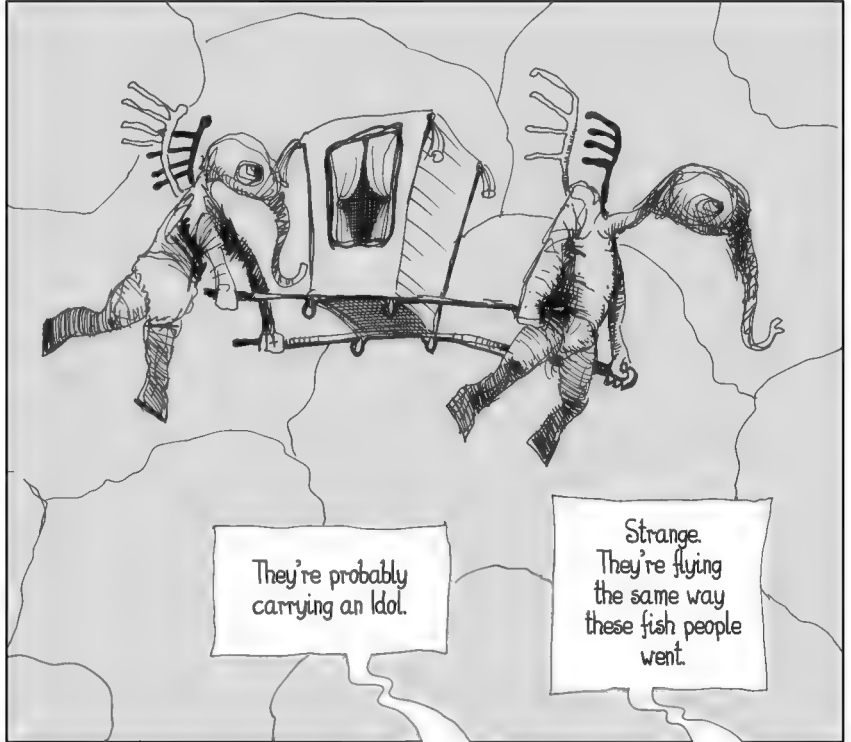
Actually, hold on, this
is what I heard about
new worlds.



But this seems
somewhat analogic.

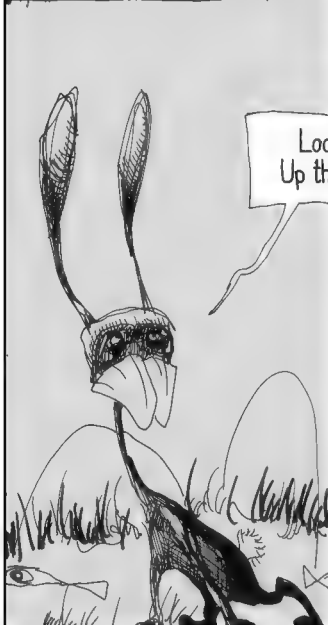


Maybe it's some kind of a new world,
barely created, still evolving,
calling out creatures for settlement.
Yes, that's an interesting analogy.

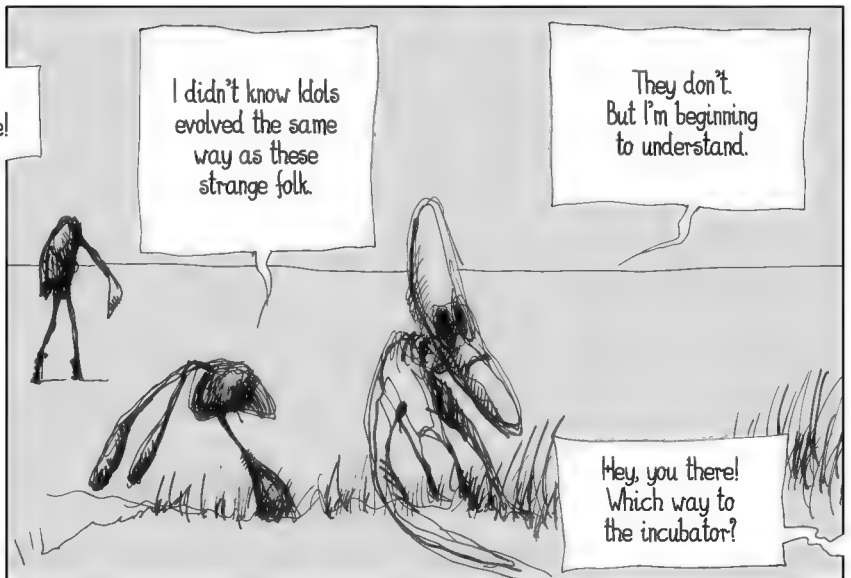


They're probably
carrying an idol.

Strange.
They're flying
the same way
these fish people
went.



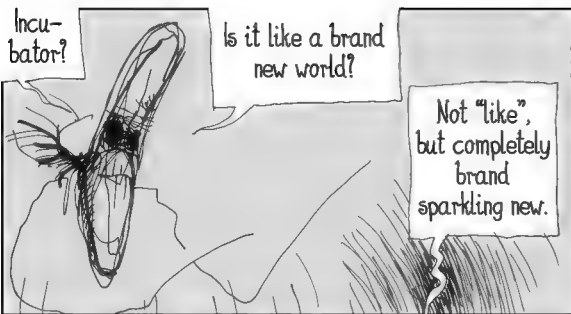
Look!
Up there!



I didn't know idols
evolved the same
way as these
strange folk.

They don't.
But I'm beginning
to understand.

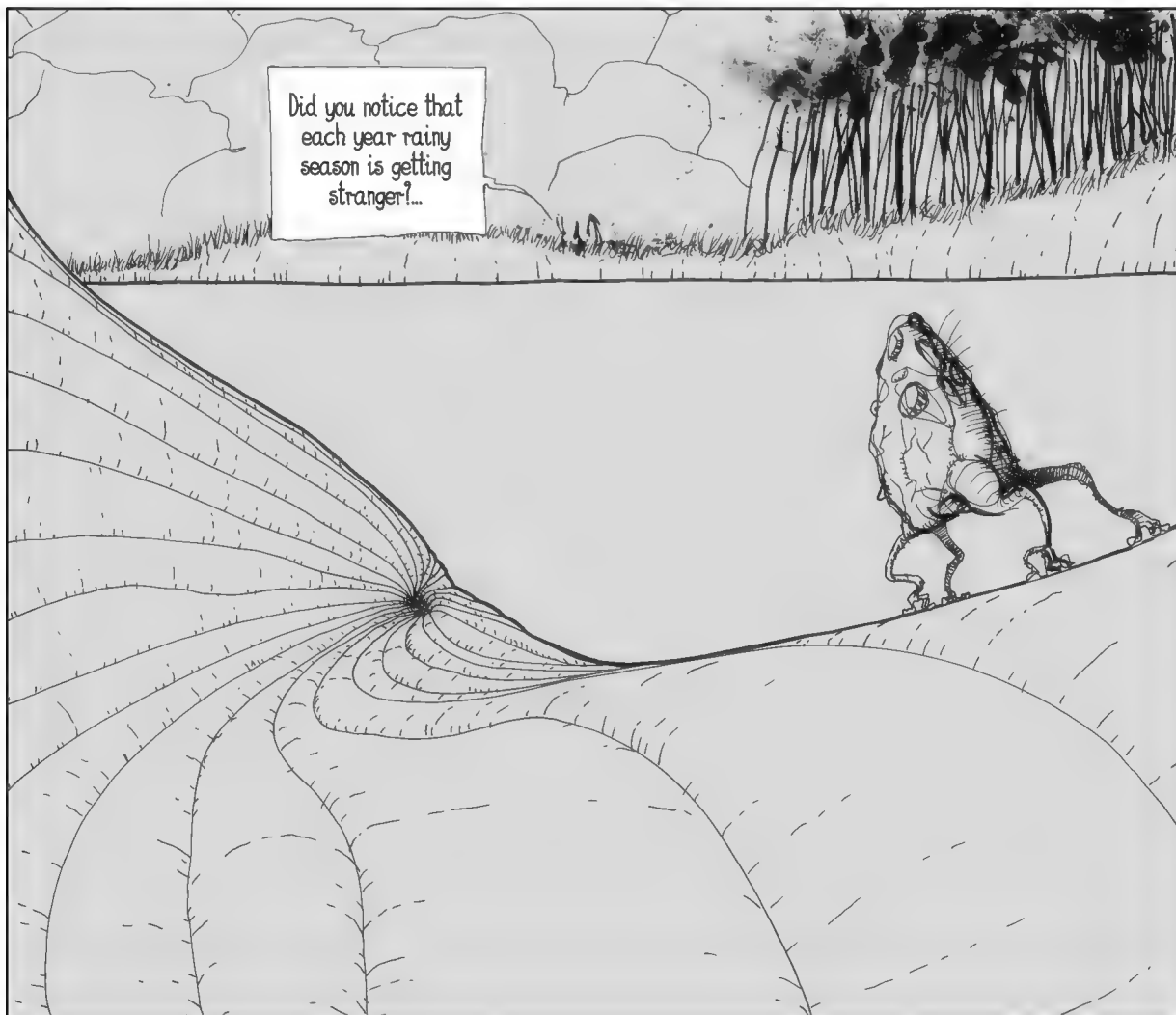
Hey, you there!
Which way to
the incubator?



Not "like",
but completely
brand
sparkling new.



Did you notice that
each year rainy
season is getting
stranger!...





Don't come near
these bushes
at night.
Evil lives there.



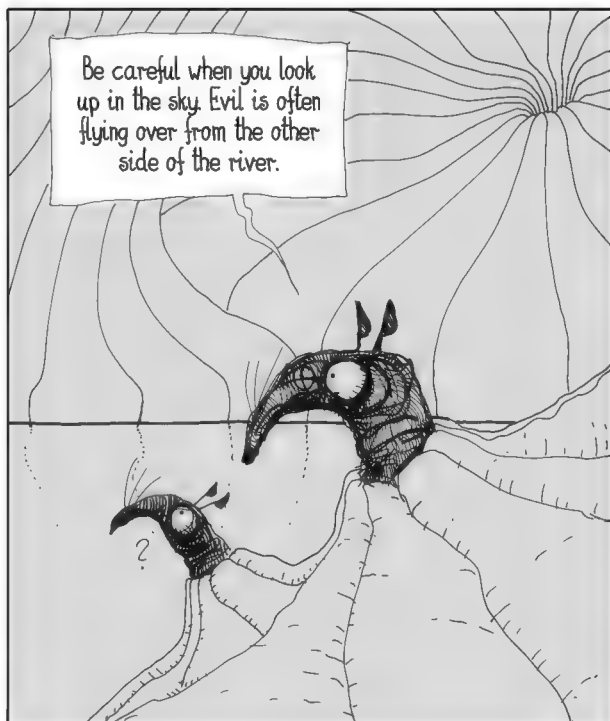
Never cross this
road during
the day.
Evil walks there.

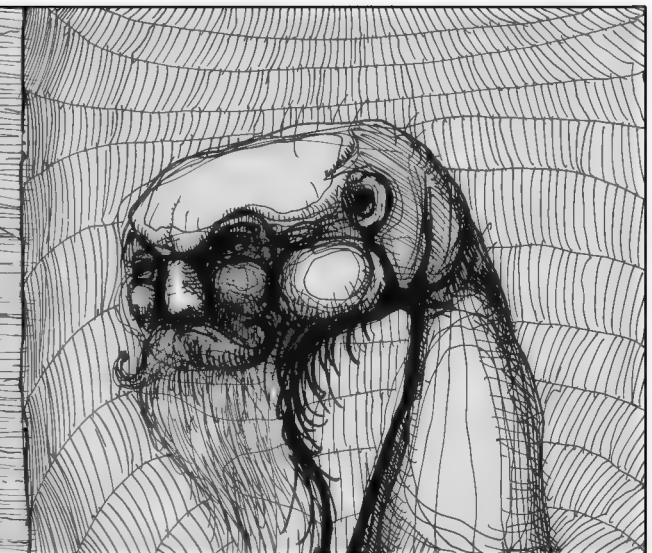
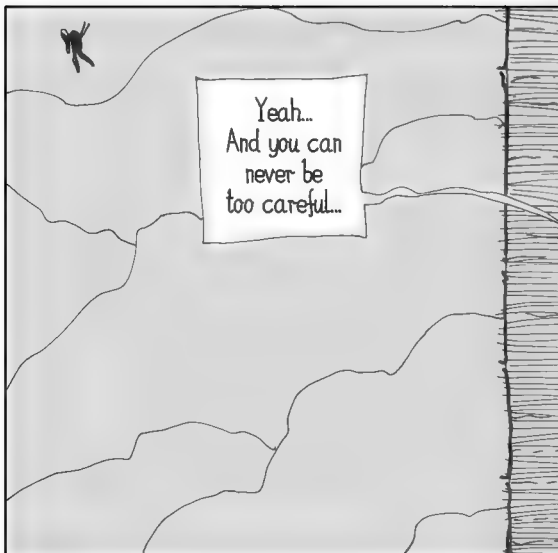
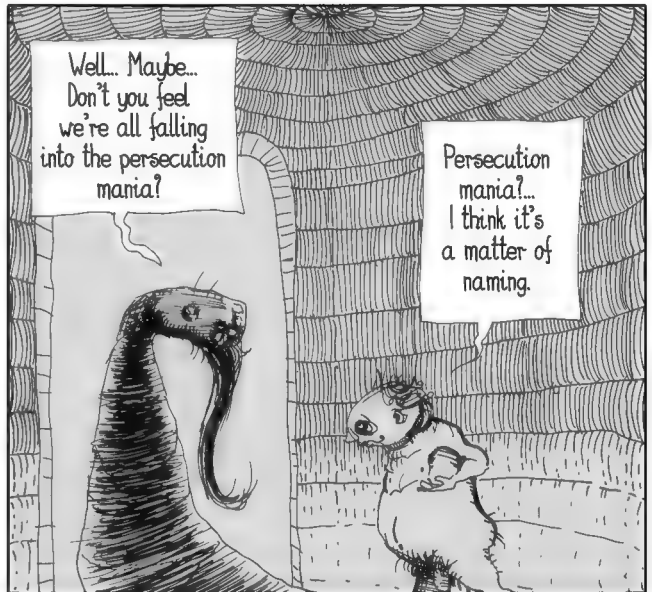
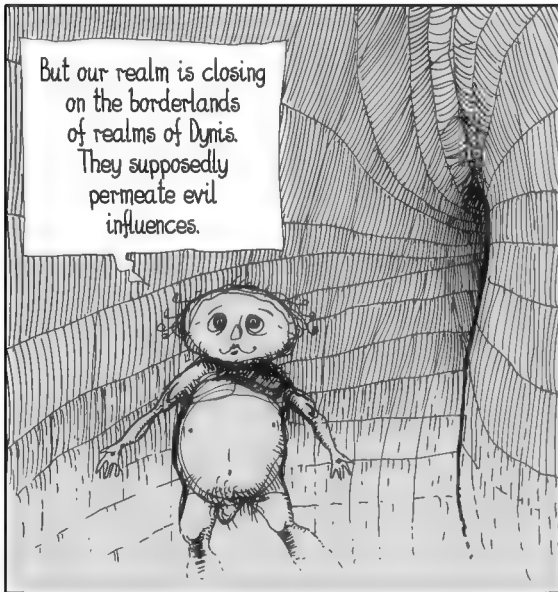
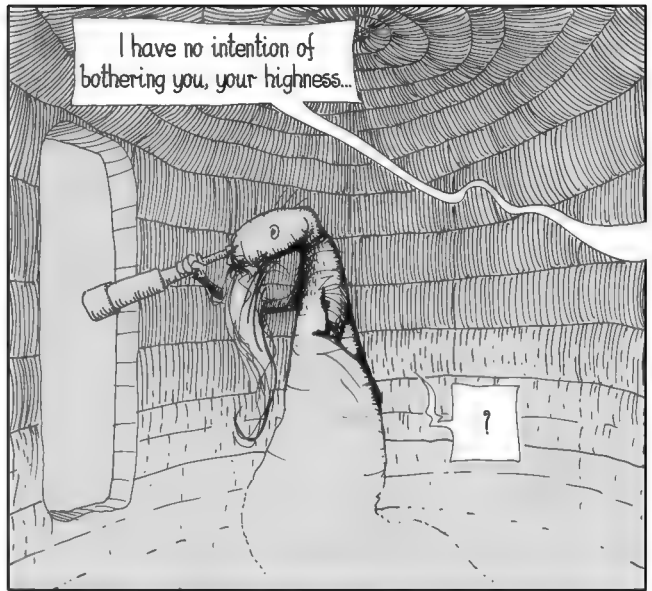
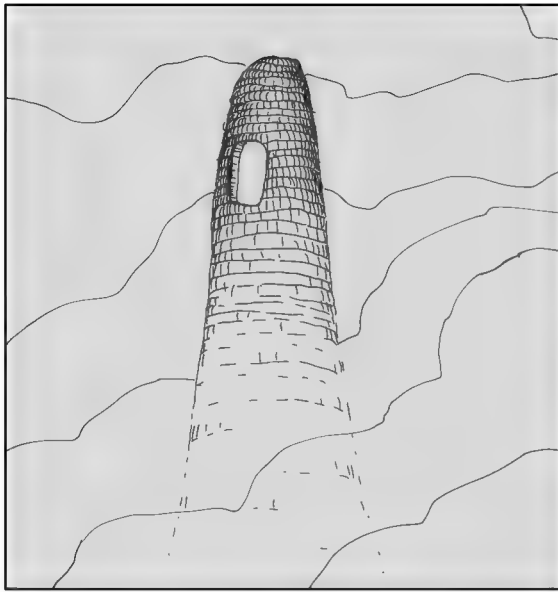


Do not venture
to the lands
beyond this river.
Evil can often be
spotted there.



Be careful when you look
up in the sky. Evil is often
flying over from the other
side of the river.







Once I thought
that I could only
lose this fight.
I was happy
thinking about
losing and
waiting for it.

Unfortunately losing was
an illusion. I can't rest.
I can't sleep.
But everybody can sleep.
I have a right to sleep
as well!

But I can't.
If only I could rest
in beloved
immobility.
You can't even
imagine what
a relief that
would be...

However the night is
constant fear, and
day is just another
illusion when you'd
think that tiredness
should take over.

I'm still winning
with the sleep.
Or maybe he avoids
me, hates me?
If so, then why?

I don't know.
Maybe the Stiller
knows. But he
doesn't talk...

They don't know
the answer either.
No shaman, no
doctor knows
a remedy to
insomnia.

Maybe he
will know
why can't
I sleep.

Sleep
forever...



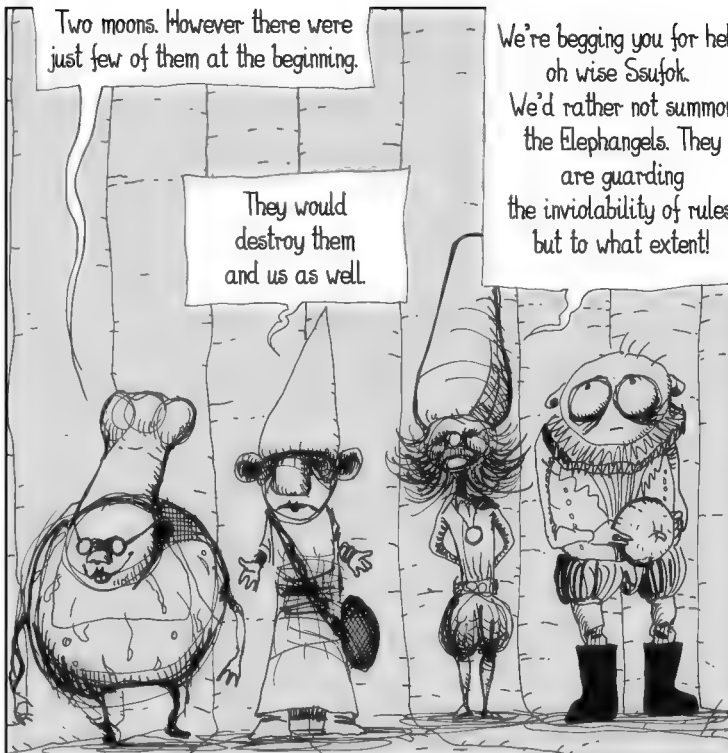


For how long
has this been
going on?

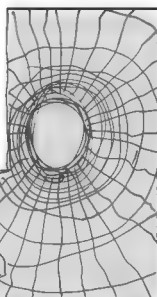
Two moons. However there were
just few of them at the beginning.

They would
destroy them
and us as well.

We're begging you for help,
oh wise Ssufok.
We'd rather not summon
the Elephangels. They
are guarding
the inviolability of rules,
but to what extent!



Now there are
more than a dozen
of them and they're
getting audacious.



It can be anyone.
We thought it was them Cross
Worshippers from the Whisper River
meadows, because - why the cross
and not a circle, even if it was
flying across the sky and teaching.
I'm wondering how, since
crosses tend to not have mouths...

But these magical
misfits were cursing
using primeval gods
names, so it could be
anyone really...

Only you can
help us!

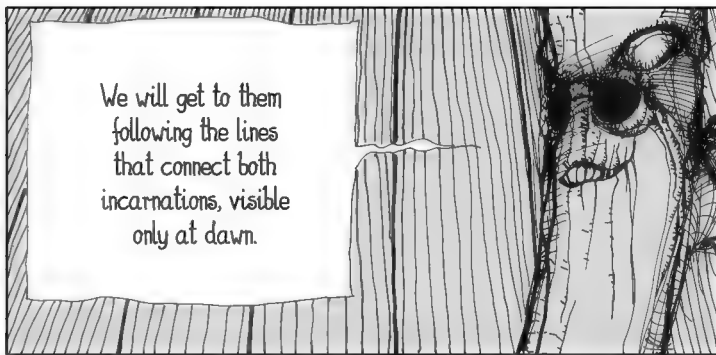




We have to sit through moon hours and go hunting at break of dawn.

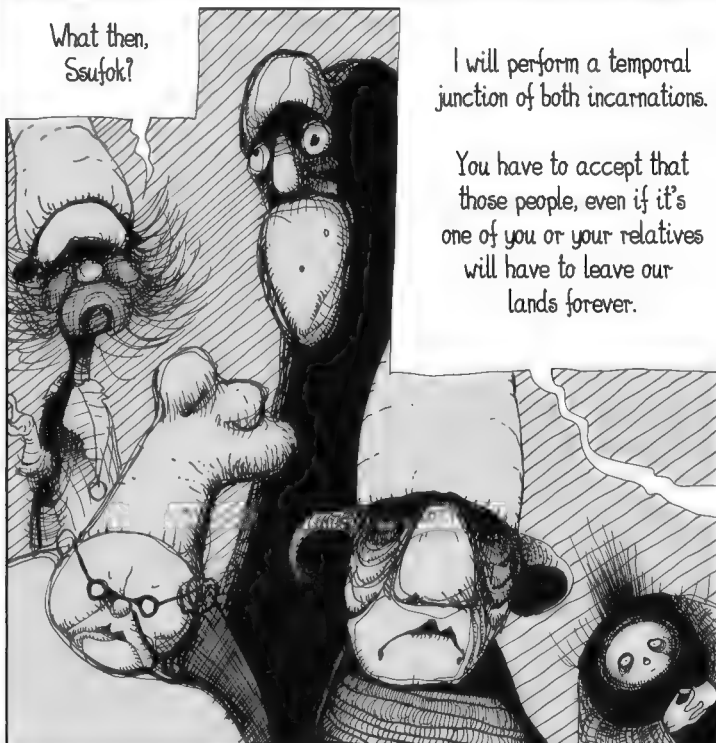
It's the moment when the night hasn't left yet but the day isn't yet born.

The sorcerers will still be rampaging in their second incarnations and their terrestrial bodies will still be laying in their houses, deep in lethargy.



We will get to them following the lines that connect both incarnations, visible only at dawn.

What then, Ssufok?

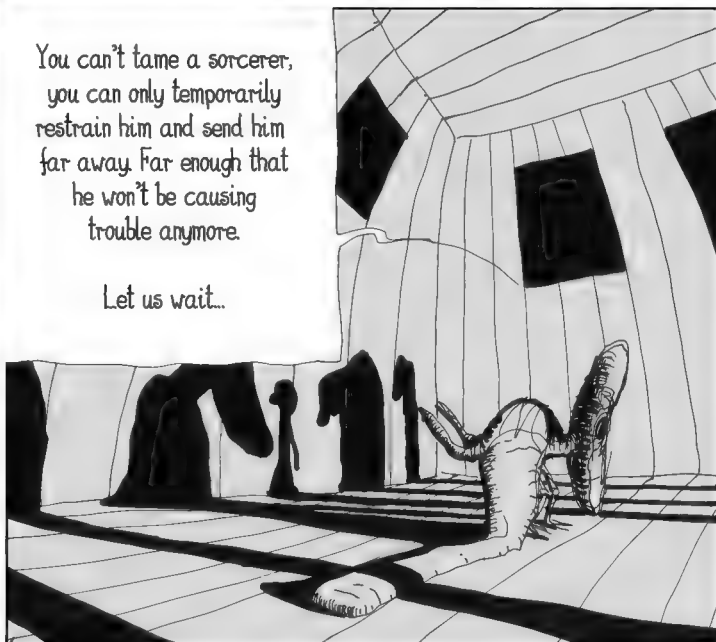


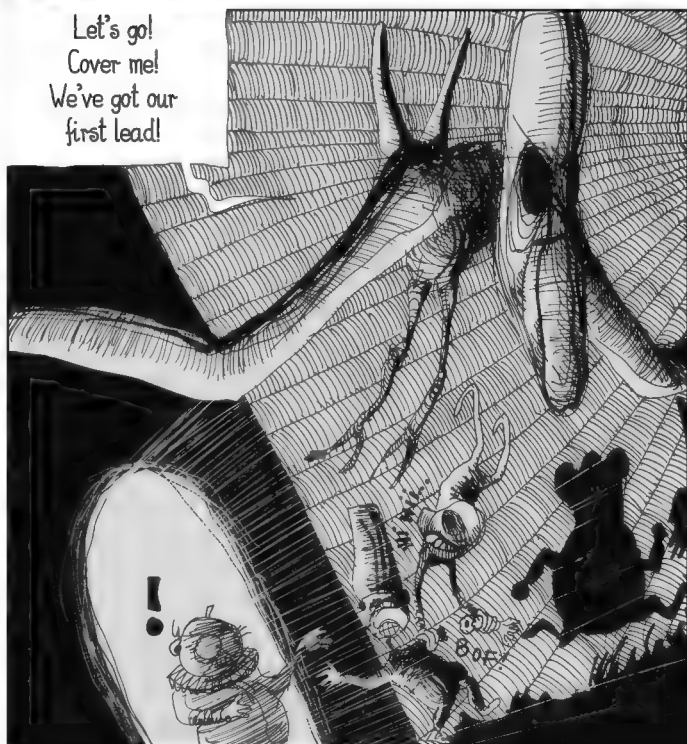
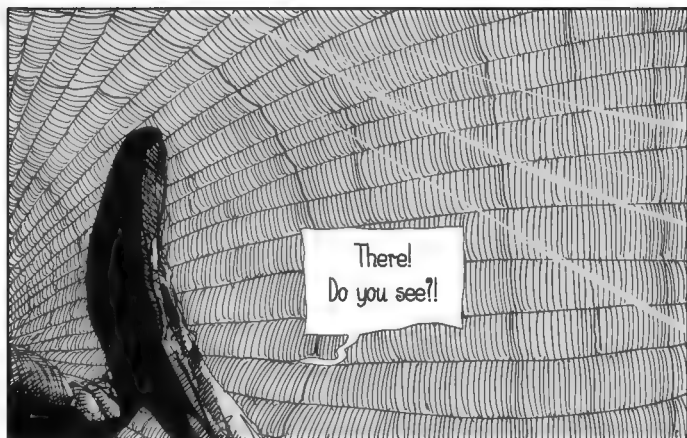
I will perform a temporal junction of both incarnations.

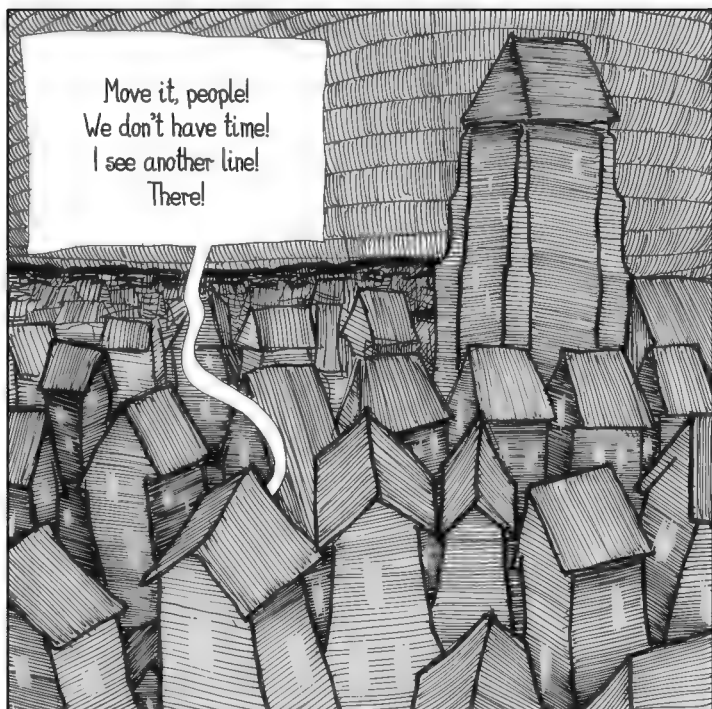
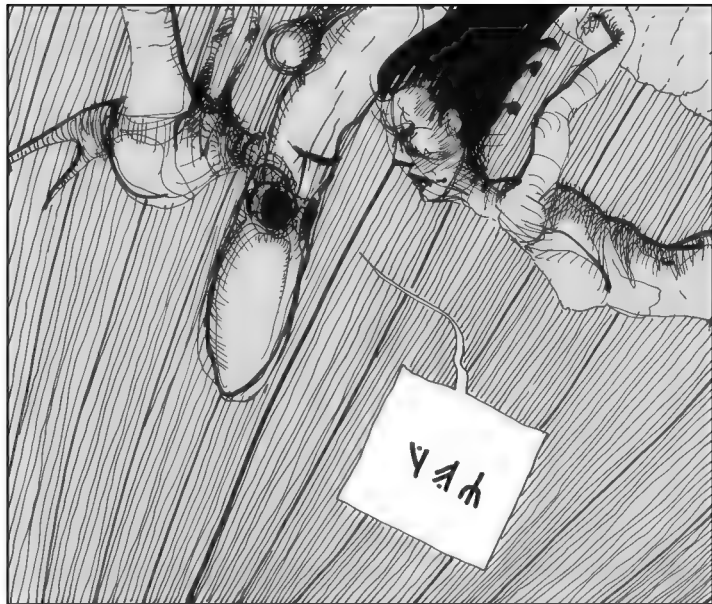
You have to accept that those people, even if it's one of you or your relatives will have to leave our lands forever.

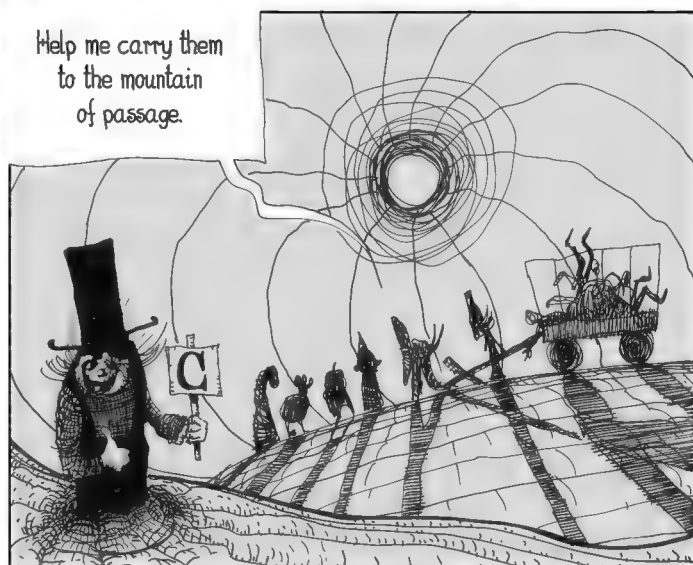
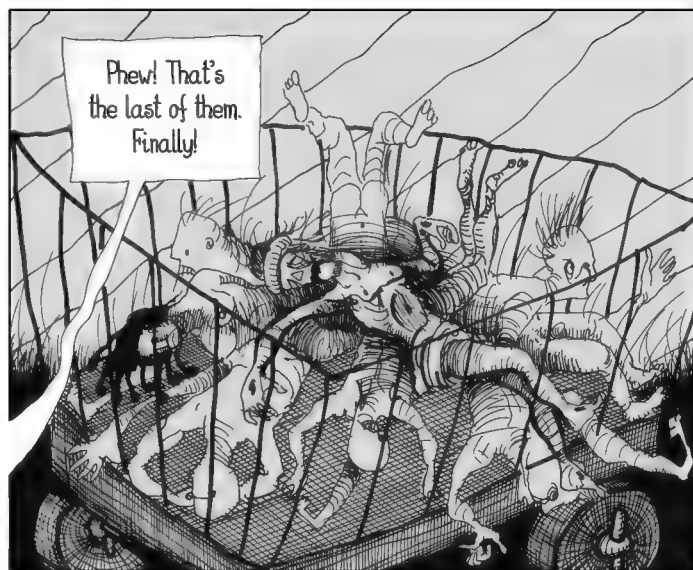
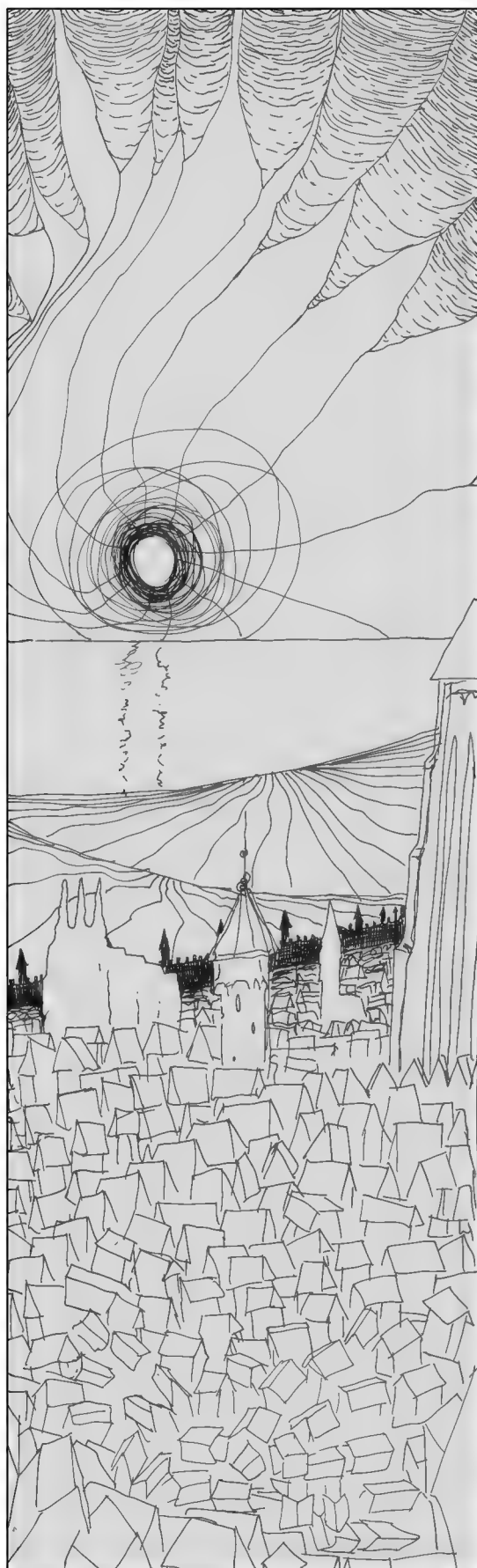
You can't tame a sorcerer, you can only temporarily restrain him and send him far away. Far enough that he won't be causing trouble anymore.

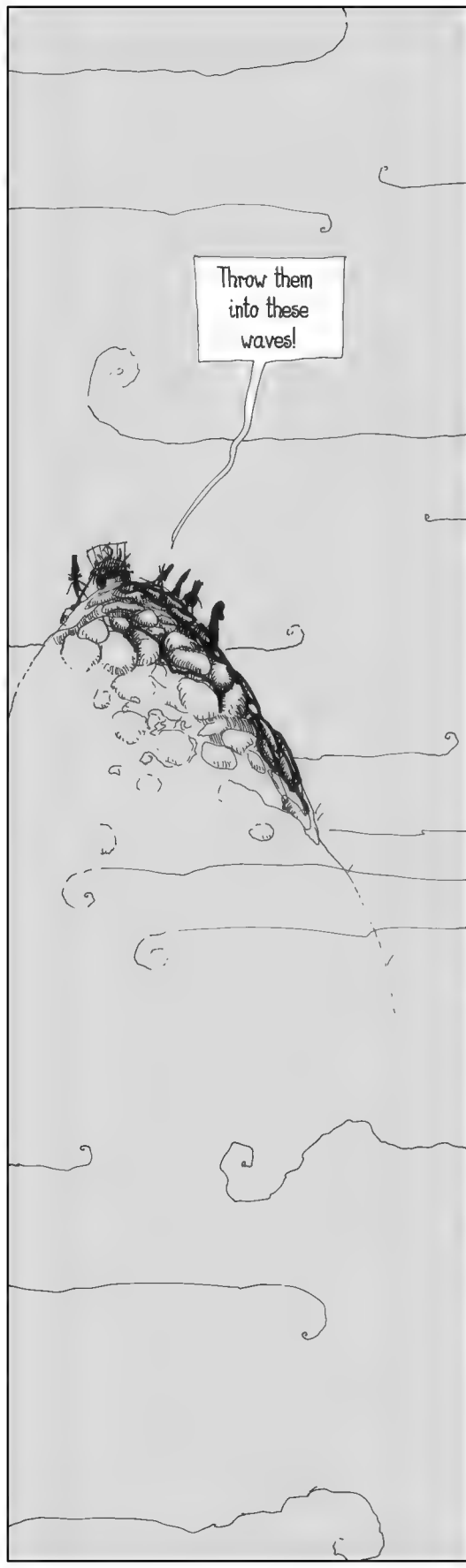
Let us wait...








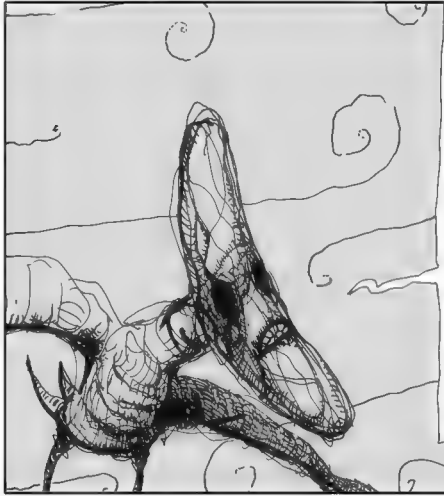




Throw them
into these
waves!



What will happen
to them, Ssufok?



Over here they
are a threat.

But there
are other worlds
that need them.

They need messiahs,
prophets, ecstasies,
leaders not fitting
the mold.



Exactly them.

BUL
BUL-
BUL

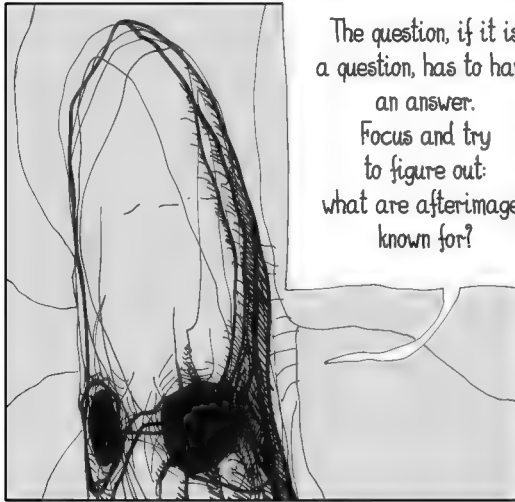
Hi Hi Hi
!





From the scientific standpoint this issue completely lacks sense.

However we can't fall into helplessness.



The question, if it is a question, has to have an answer. Focus and try to figure out: what are afterimages known for?



HMMM...



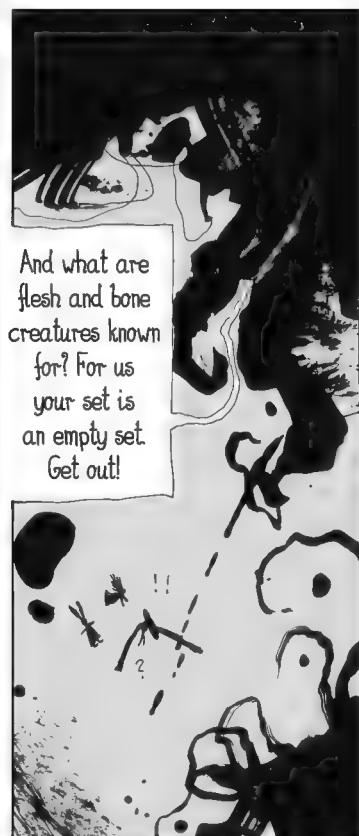
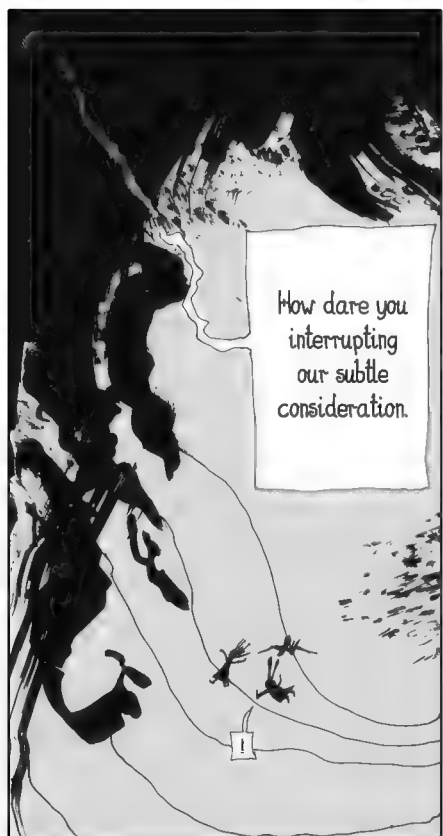
I think there's only one way to find out.

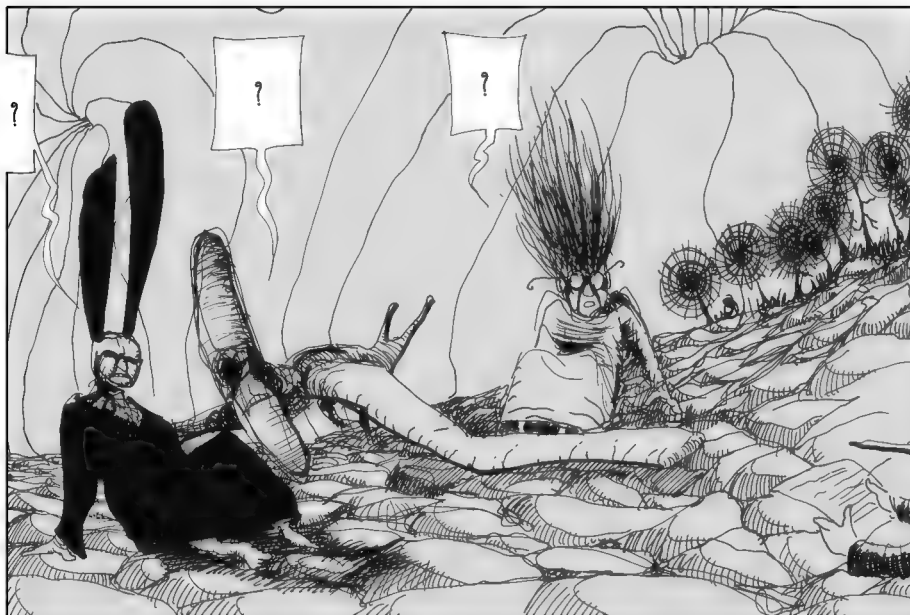
Look up!

Stare at the Sun!



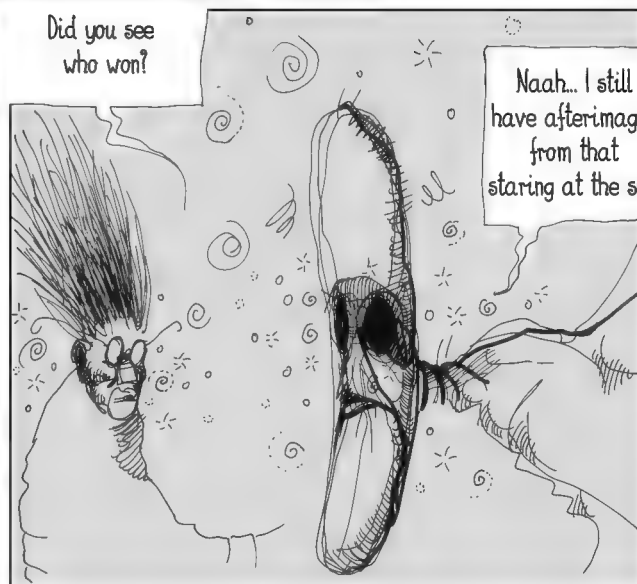
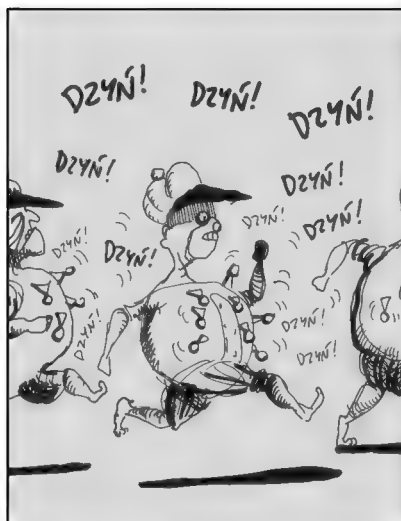
HMMM...





Because our wise men
couldn't find the answer
to the first question,
we're moving on to
question number two.

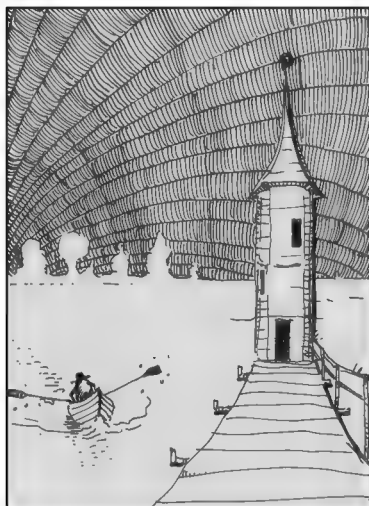
Does merit travel
faster than laugh?



Did you see
who won?

Naah... I still
have afterimages
from that
staring at the sun.







Fresh fish! fragile
Pasters, soft Jasks,
armadillos from
the bottom of the bay!



Scales...
Fresh scales
from the sea
Halluciner...

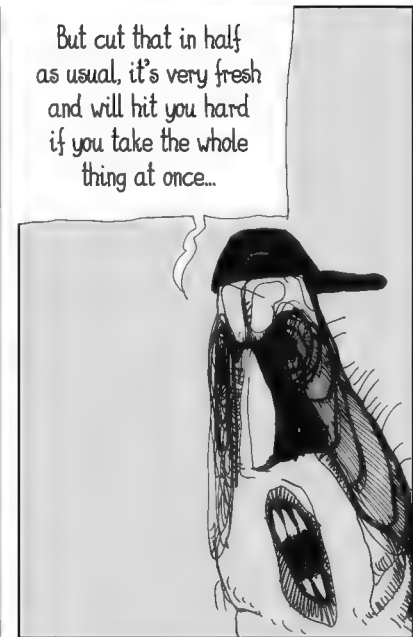


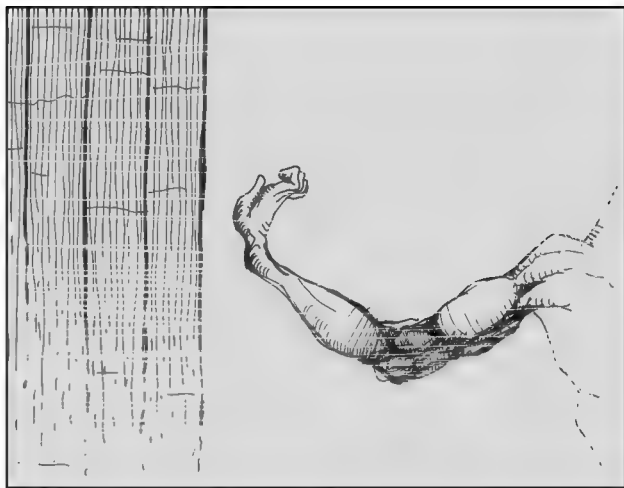
How much?



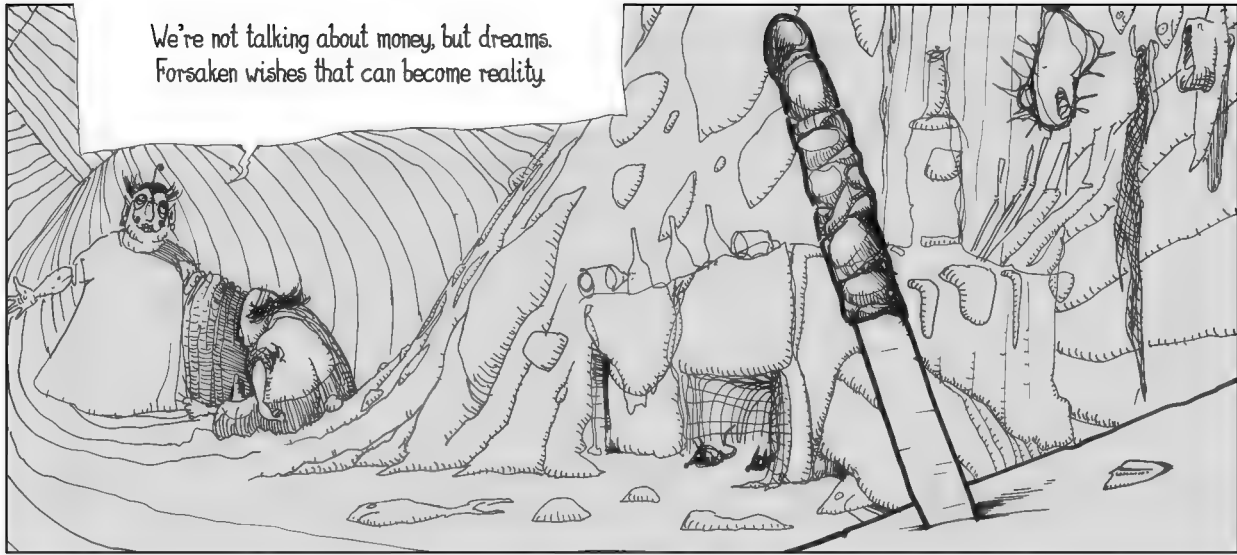
Twenty a scale.

But cut that in half
as usual, it's very fresh
and will hit you hard
if you take the whole
thing at once...

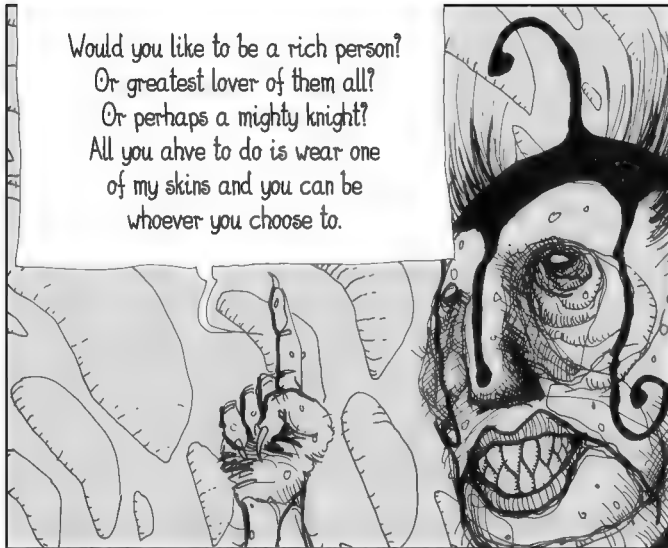




We're not talking about money, but dreams.
Forsaken wishes that can become reality.



Would you like to be a rich person?
Or greatest lover of them all?
Or perhaps a mighty knight?
All you have to do is wear one
of my skins and you can be
whoever you choose to.



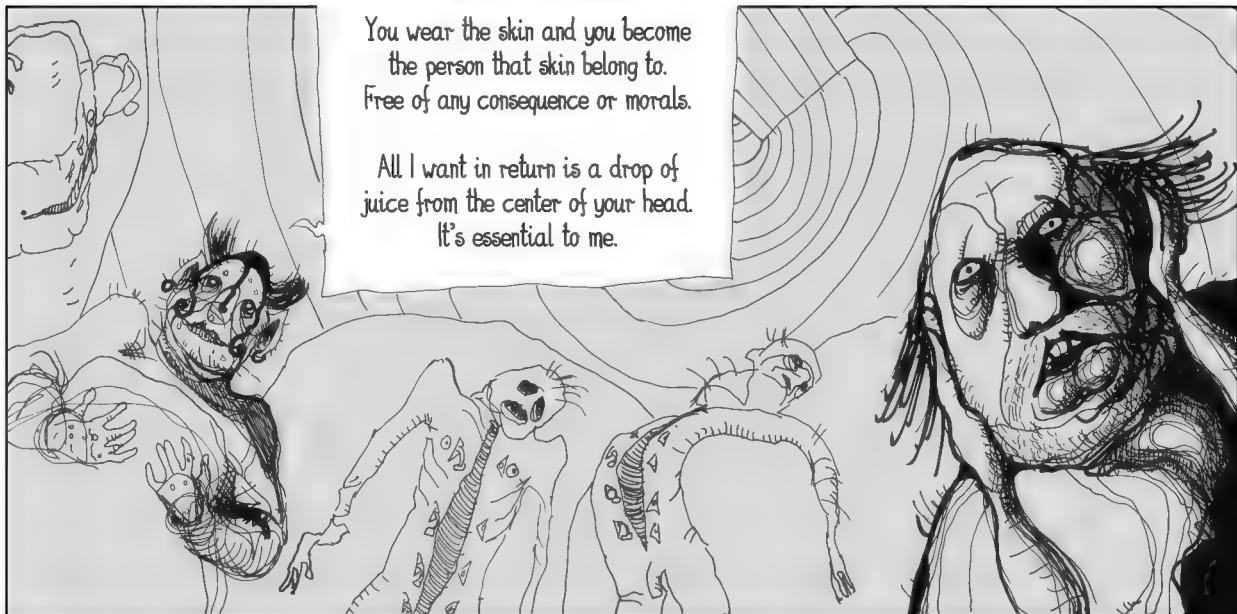
I have skins of thieves, wisemen,
commoners, wizards and swordsmen.



But...
The
price?

You wear the skin and you become
the person that skin belong to.
Free of any consequence or morals.

All I want in return is a drop of
juice from the center of your head.
It's essential to me.

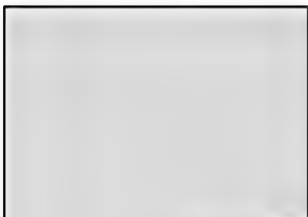




Ok then. You say I can be anyone I choose?

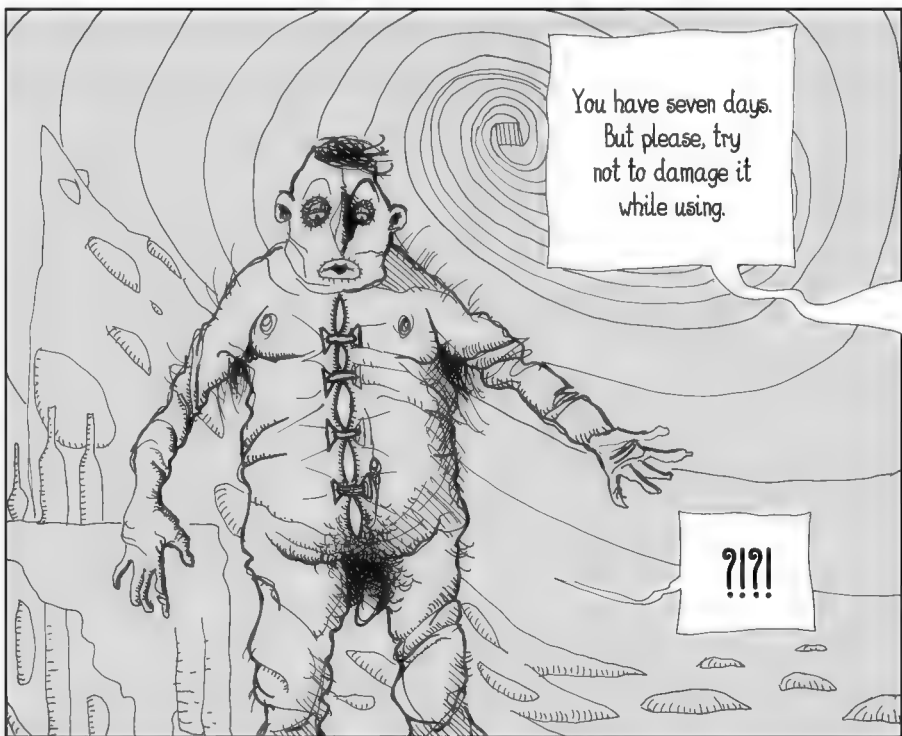


Yes. Basic set usually fulfills most of needs.



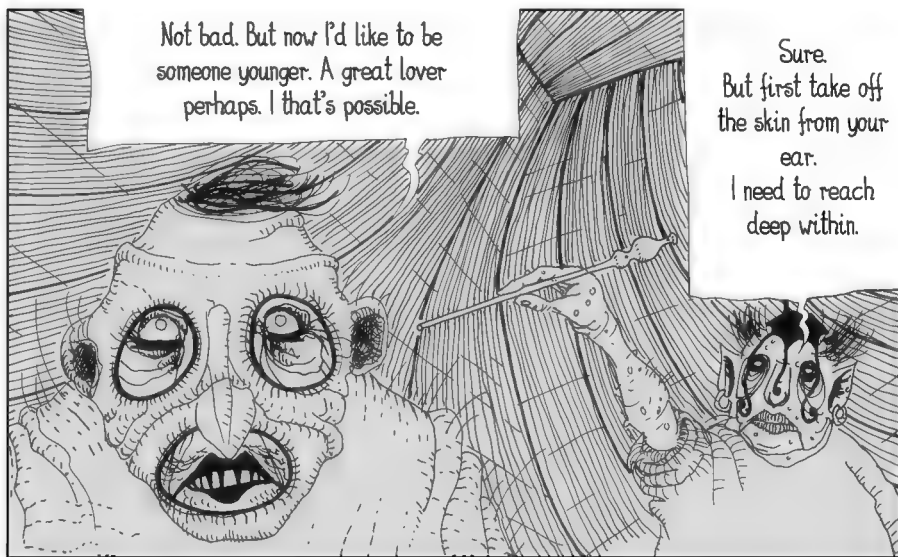
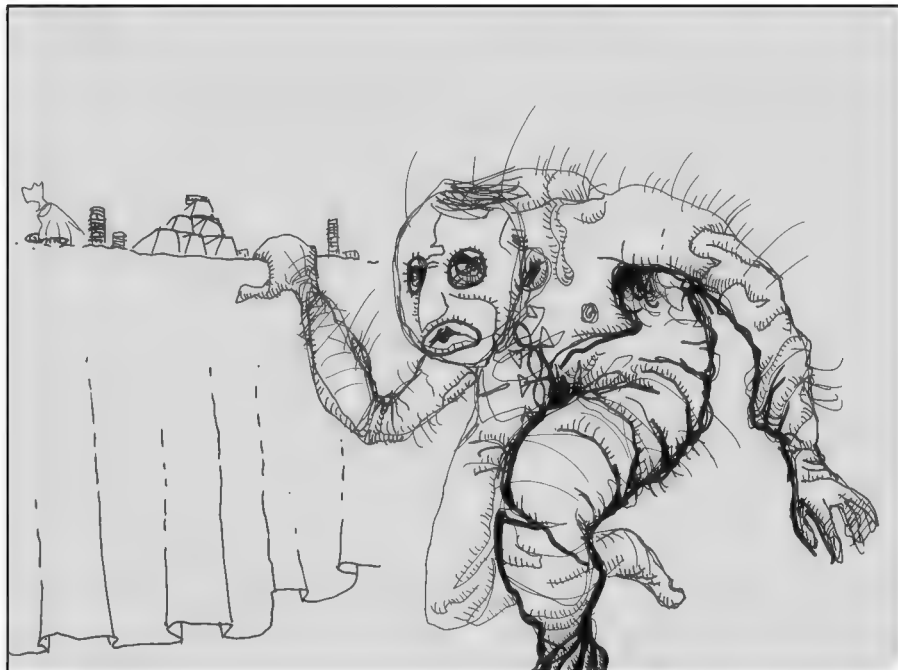
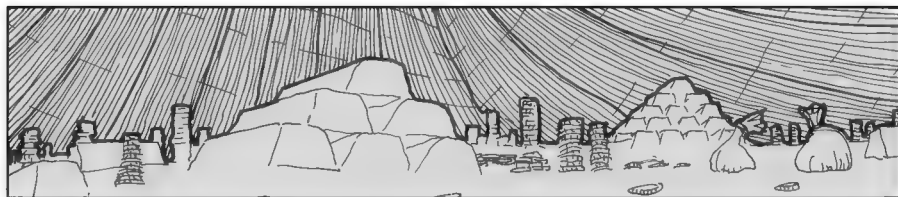
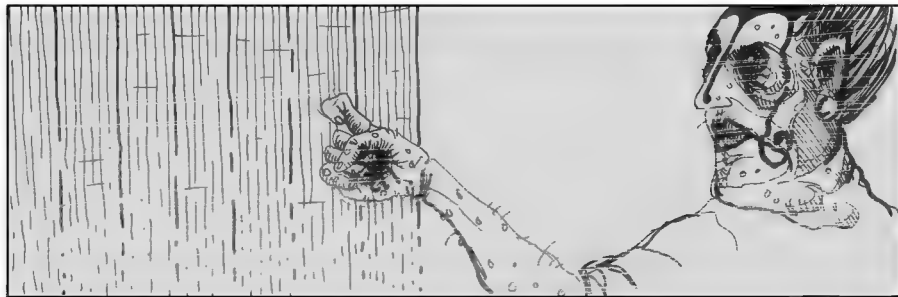
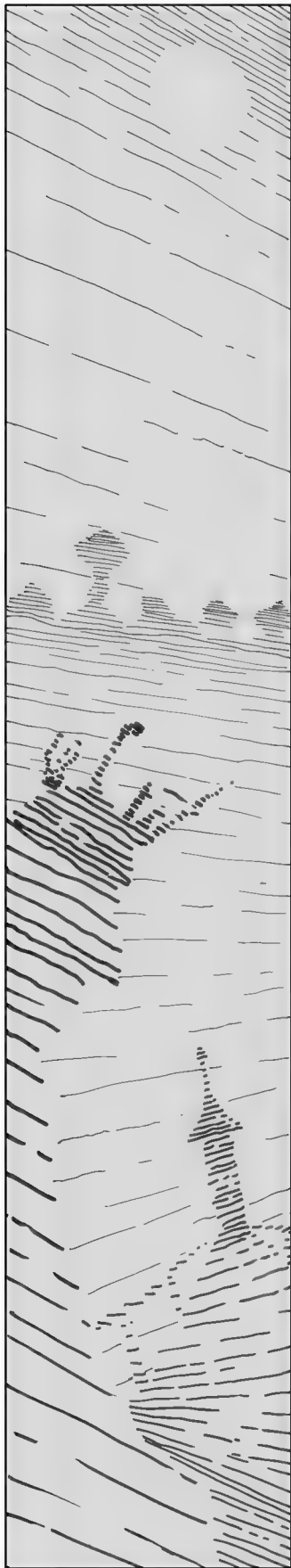
But of course. Here you go.
Skin from a gambler crook.
Just put it on...

Give me skin
of someone
who always
wins at dice.
I want lots
of money
and I want to
get them
the easy way.



You have seven days.
But please, try
not to damage it
while using.

?!?!?



Not bad. But now I'd like to be
someone younger. A great lover
perhaps. I that's possible.

Sure.
But first take off
the skin from your
ear.
I need to reach
deep within.



Fantastic.
But now I'd like
to taste more
deadly hunt.



Yes. I have skin from the
killer from Al-Gafaut.
Human beast drunk with
spilled blood...



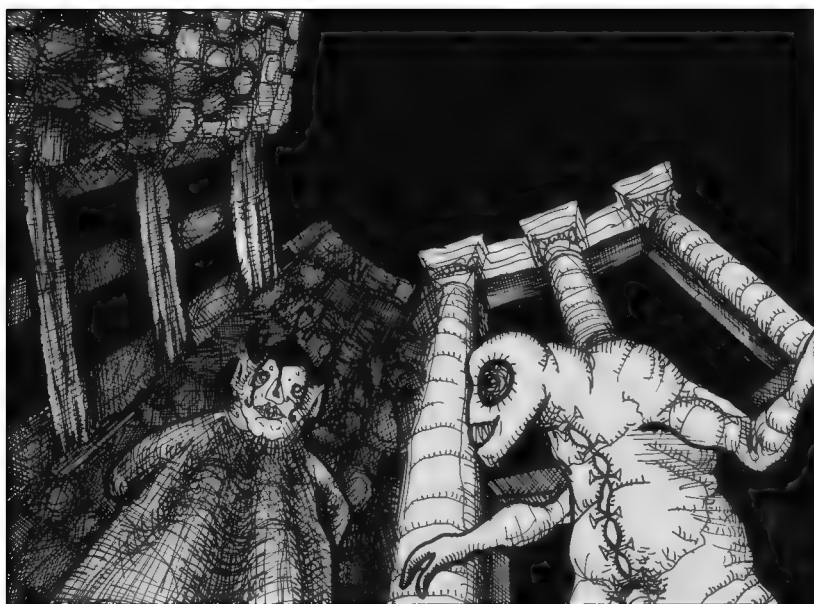
A simple fisherman?
That's what you
wanted to say!

Great!
I'm making good
progress as for
a simple... Eech!

Yes.
Strange...
For a minute
I couldn't
remember...

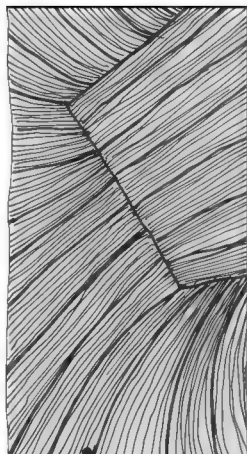


It's the seventh night.
You have to give back
the skin.



Ah, that ruby glimmer of blood
and mysterious glassiness
of death.
I started to sew a tapestry, you know.
I have ears, tongue, eyes...
Now I just have to compose it properly.

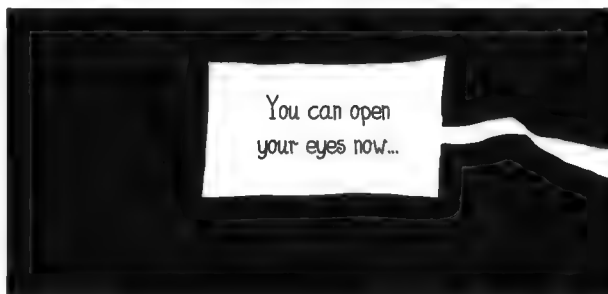
I want to experience
something stronger.
Give me a skin
of a mighty man,
I want to be
the most powerful
being on Earth,
I want to be a hurricane
to the human puppets
around me.



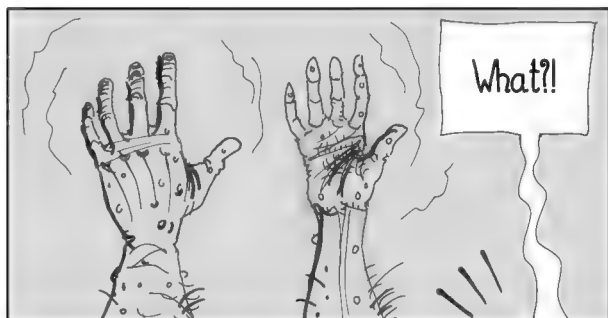
I've got something like
that, if you desire...
Close your eyes.



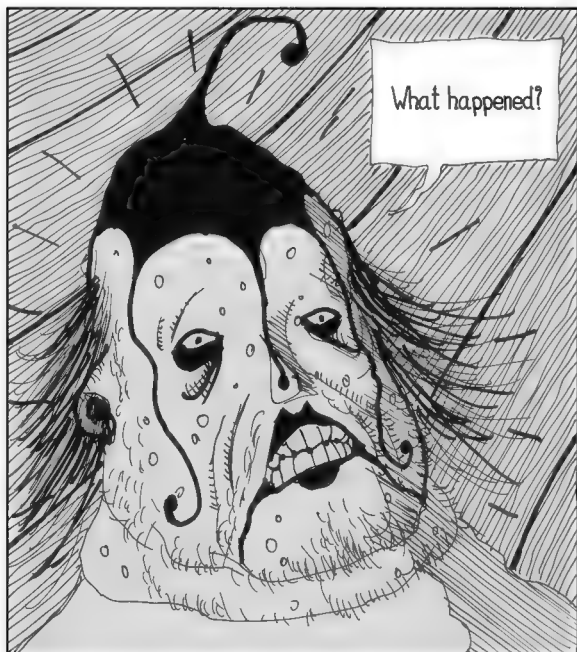
You can open
your eyes now...



What?!



What happened?

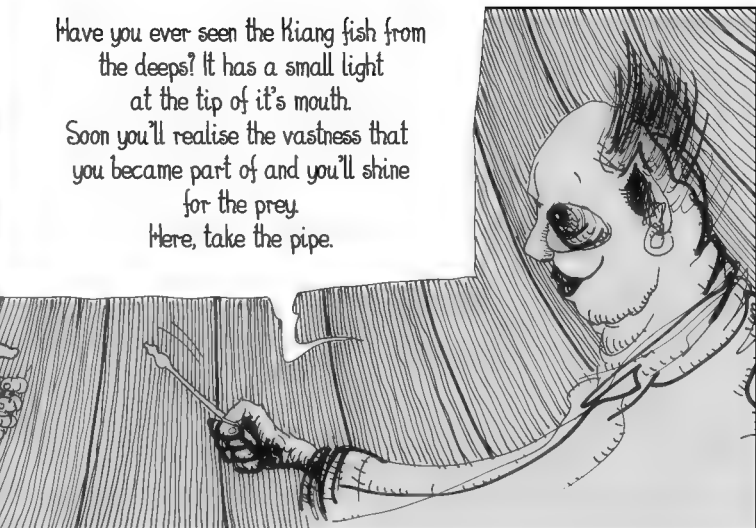


Your wish
is granted.





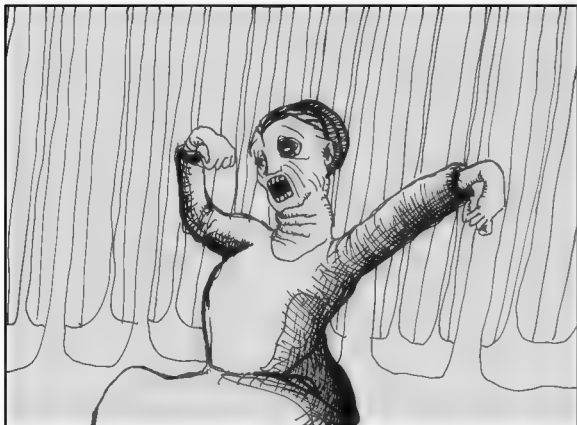
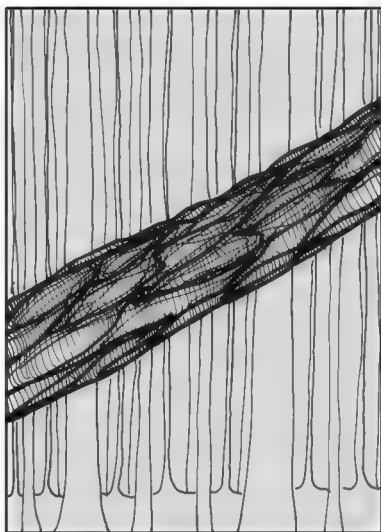
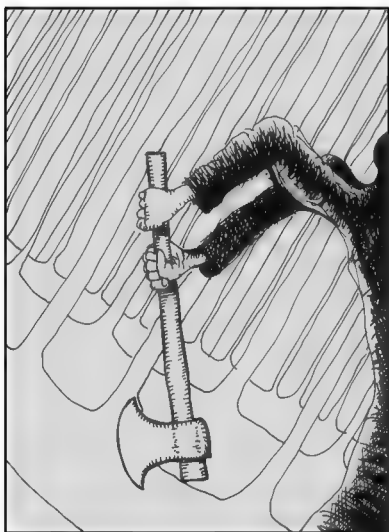
Have you ever seen the Kiang fish from
the deeps? It has a small light
at the tip of it's mouth.
Soon you'll realise the vastness that
you became part of and you'll shine
for the prey.
Here, take the pipe.

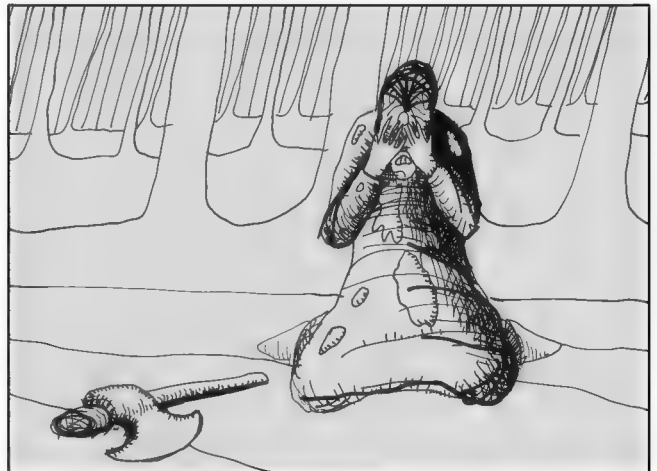
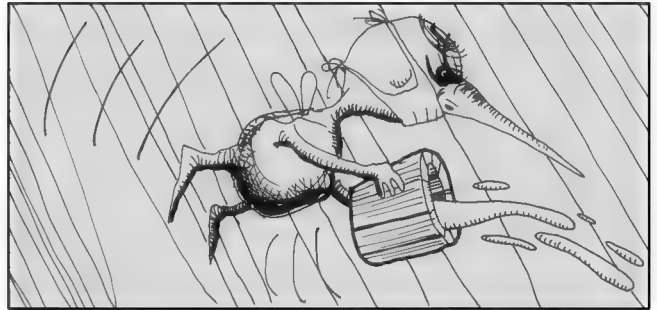
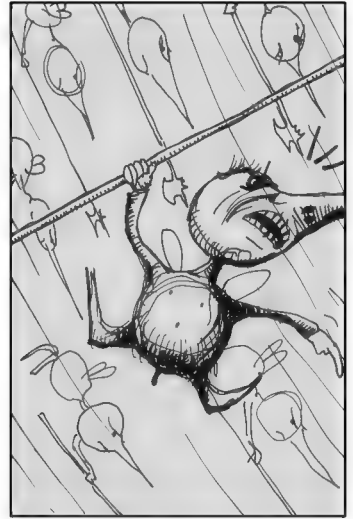
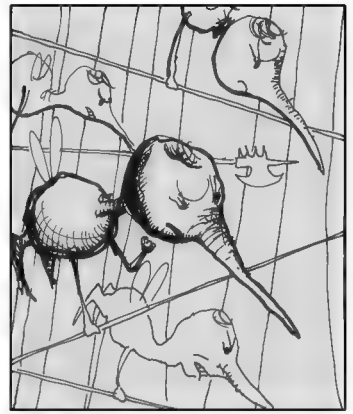
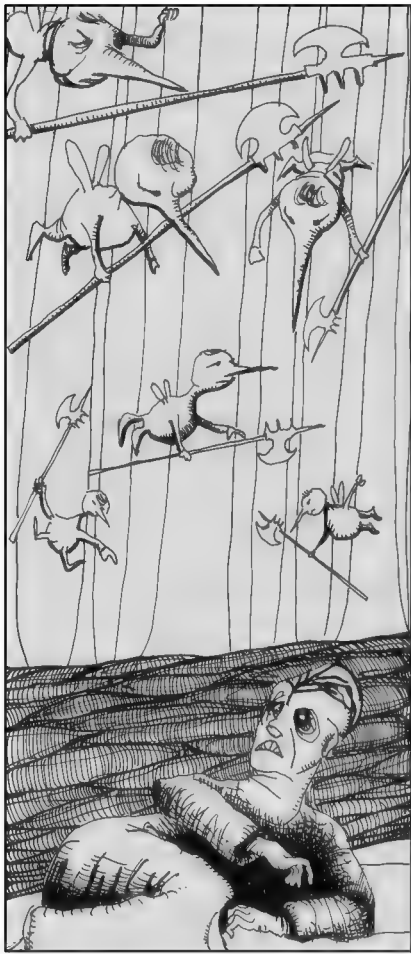


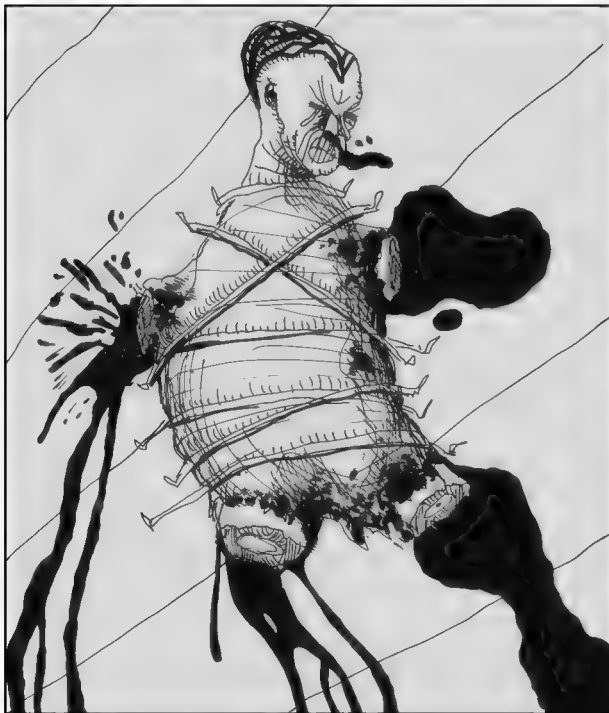
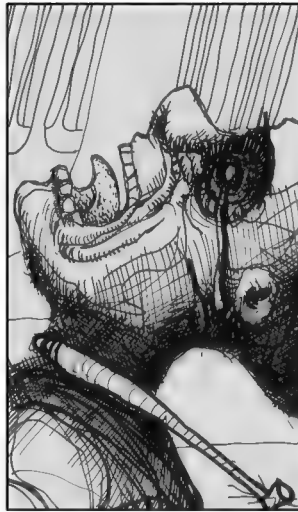
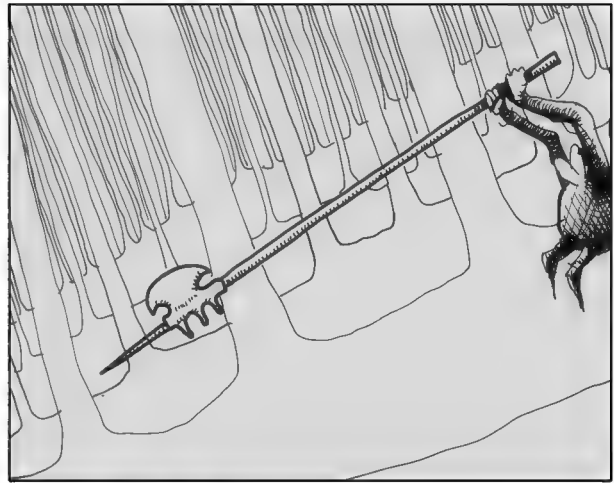
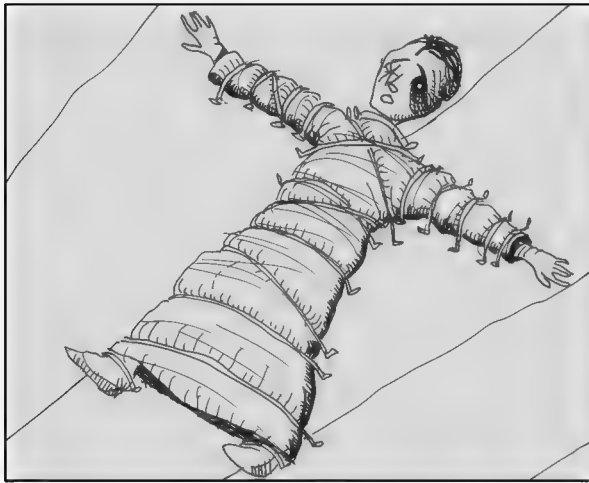
Now you are the decoy used
by invisible predator.
You are a part of the mightiest
being - just as you wished.

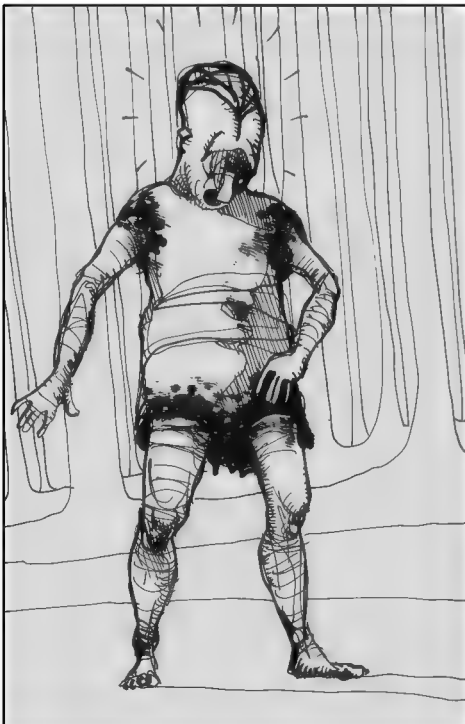
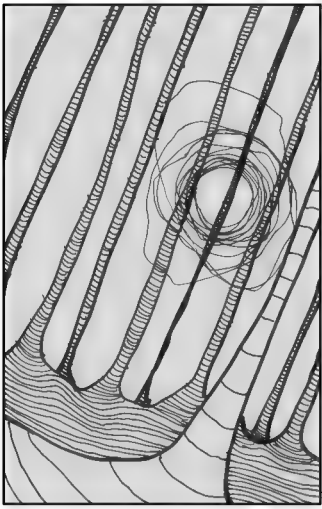


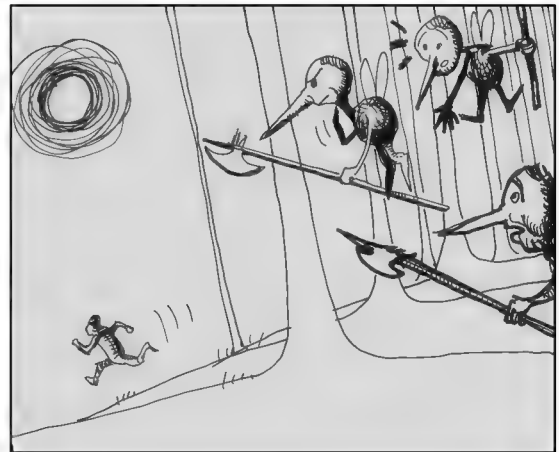
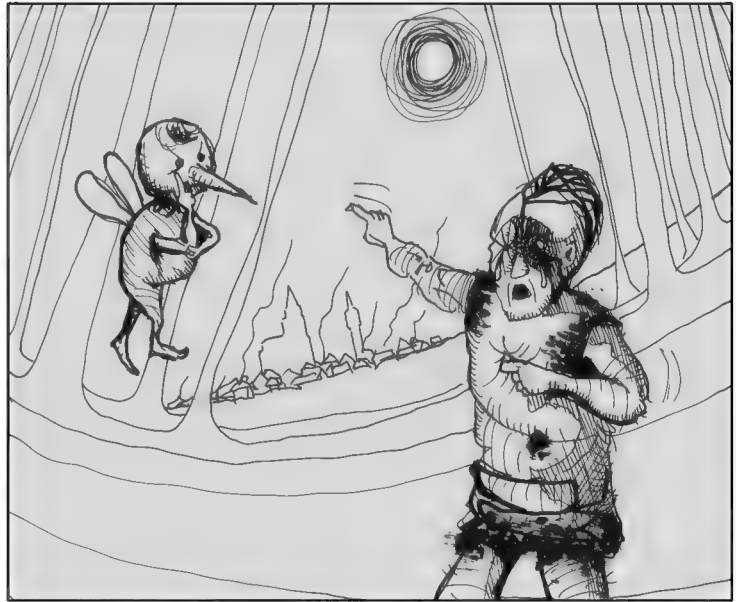
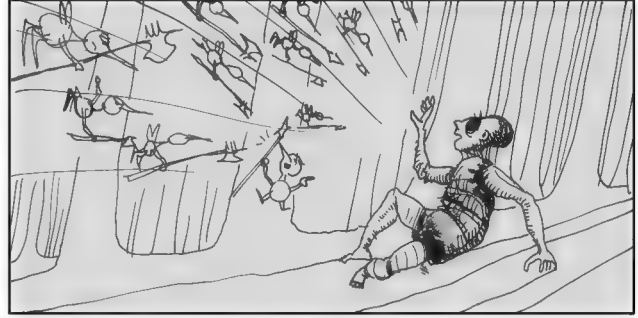
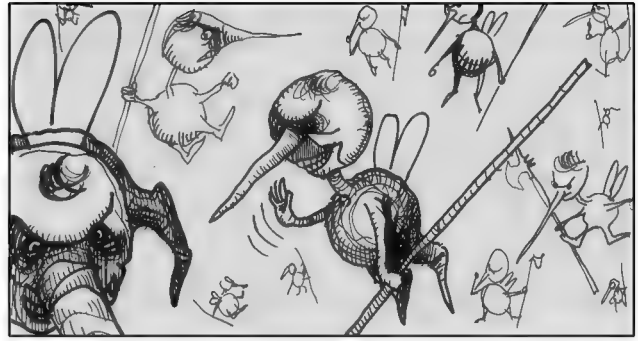


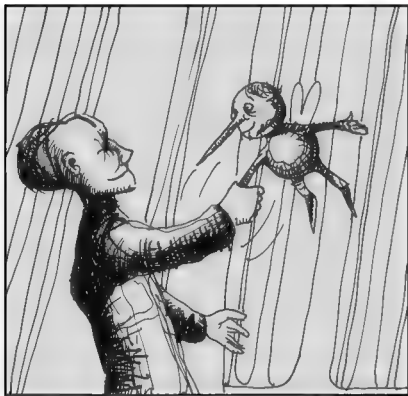
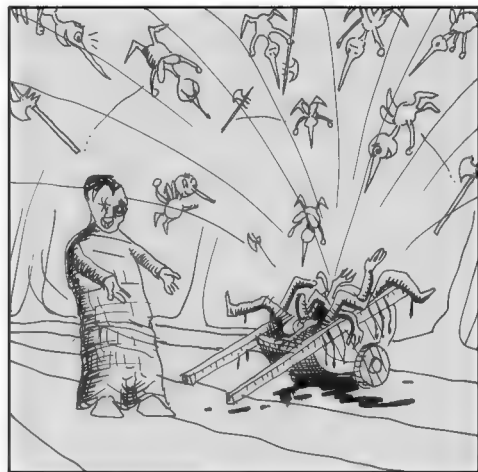
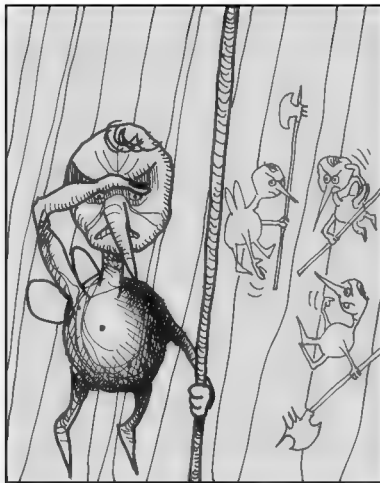
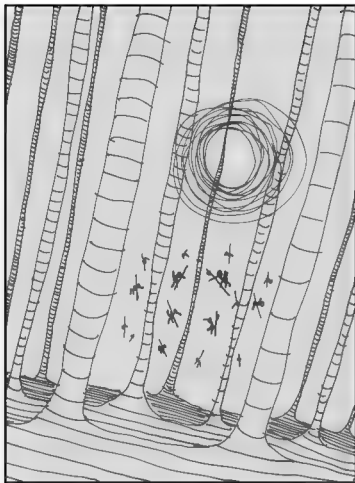


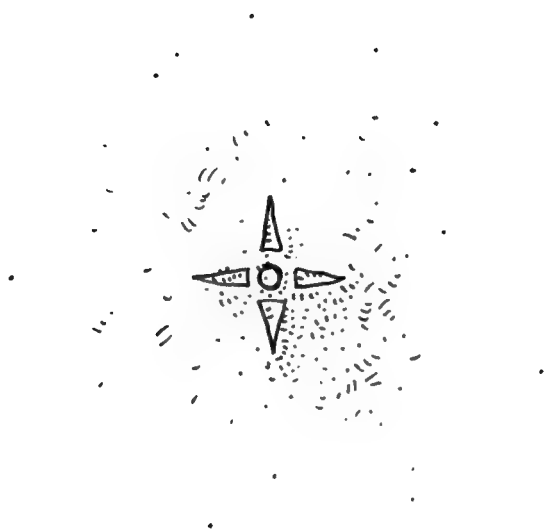


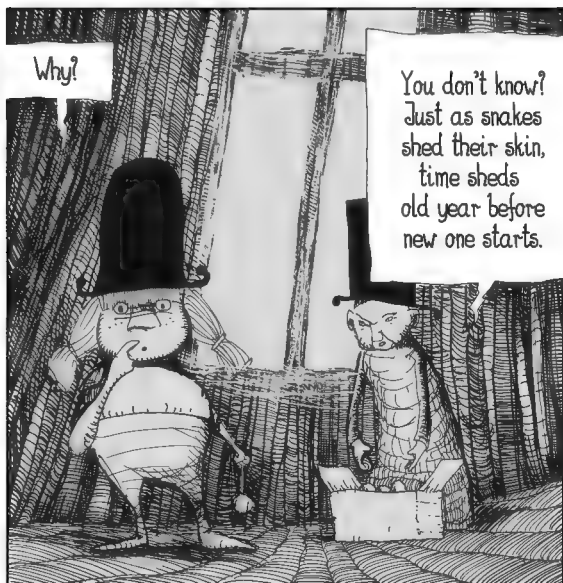








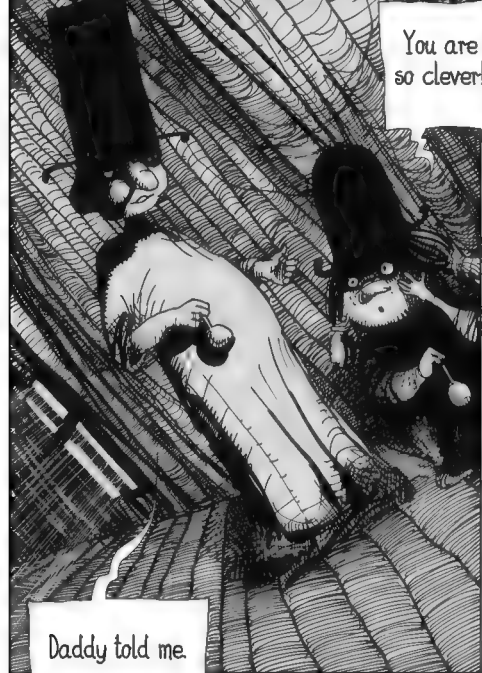




In the memory of that
we always set a basket
with snakes on the last
day of each year.

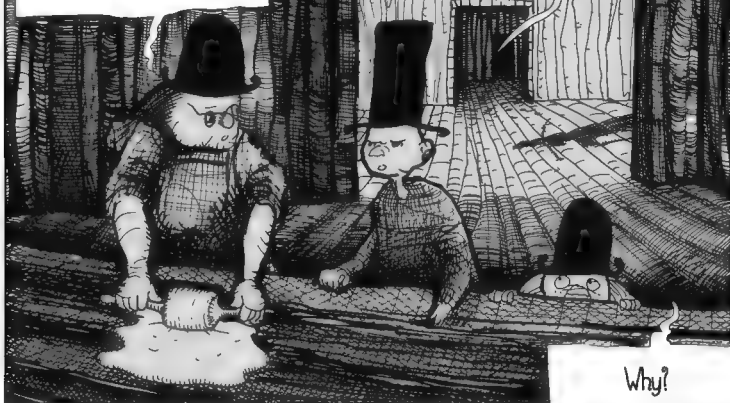


You are
so clever!



Daddy told me.

Did you put old things
into your stockings?



Yes.

Why?

When the old
year will be
passing by
it will take them
away.



You told me
something different.



Well, you know...

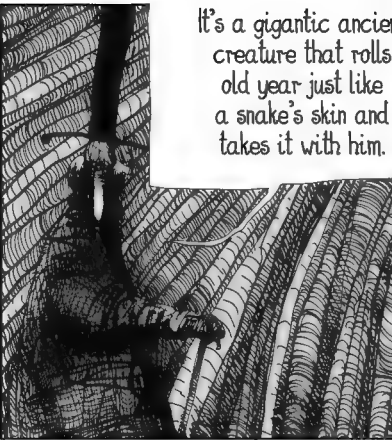


Oh well, little
Mfalli is
already big enough.


You see Mfalli,
Loma found out earlier
because he's older
than you. To be honest,
old year does not pass
by itself.

The Conjuror helps it.






It's a gigantic ancient creature that rolls old year just like a snake's skin and takes it with him.



He takes old things from houses in order for new and better ones to appear during upcoming new year.



They say that you can see the Conjuror on the last day of the year just as the evening sets in.
You can see him taking old year.
Did you know!



No...




Eh, you know nothing...

Loma!
Help me set the table.




Loma, get Mfalli to help grandmother.

But...
She's gone.



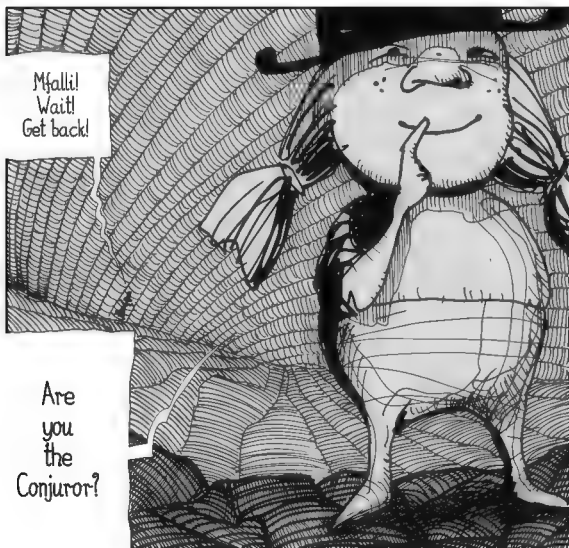
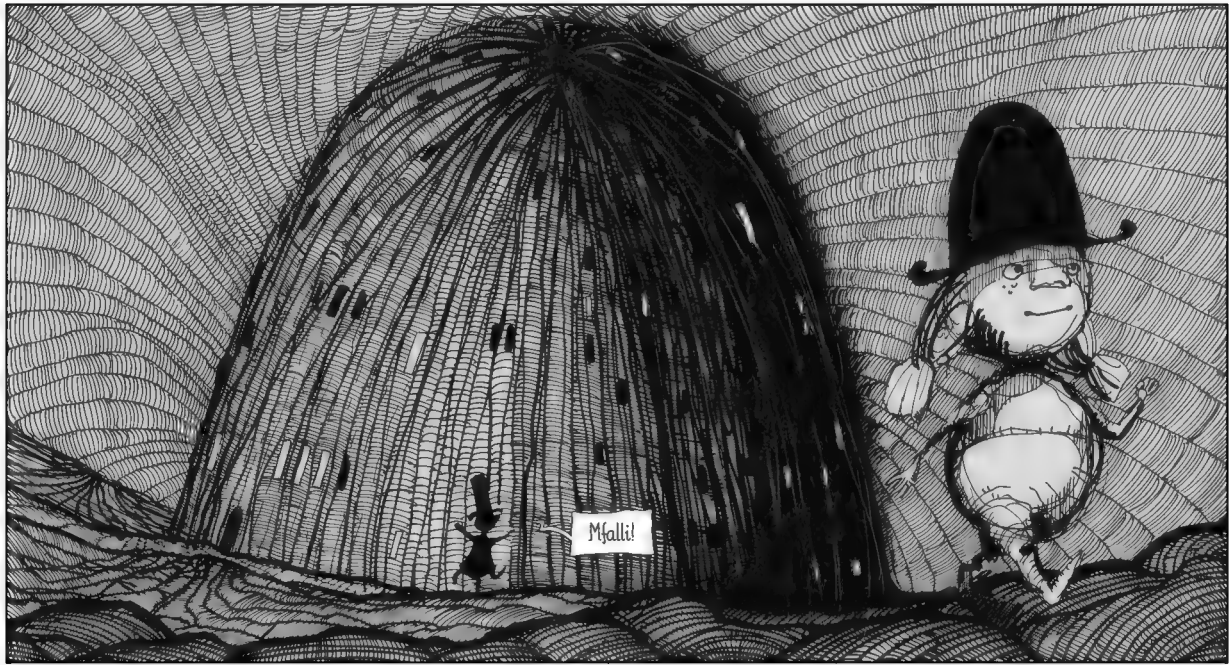
She...
went outside!

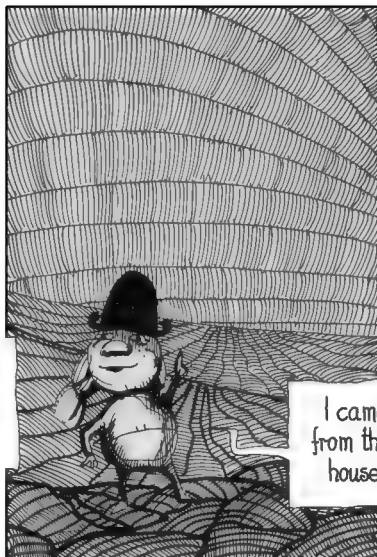
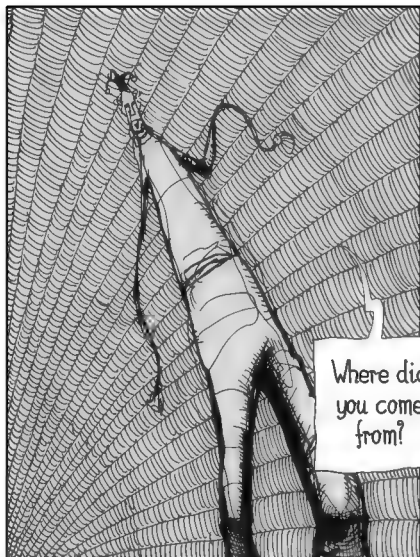
Oh gods!



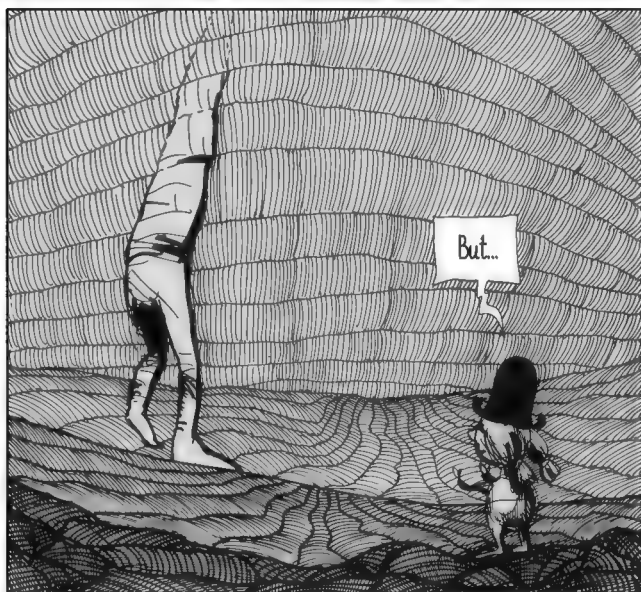
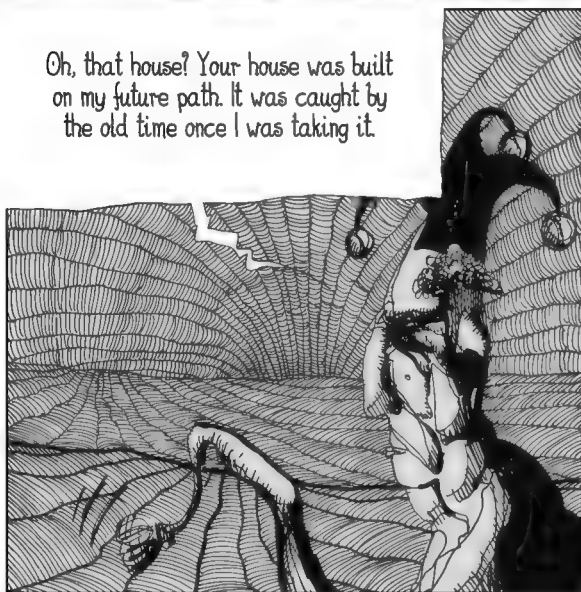
I'll go get her!

Wait!!






Oh, that house? Your house was built on my future path. It was caught by the old time once I was taking it.








Grandpa,
tell us a story!

Ok then...
Once there
was a village...

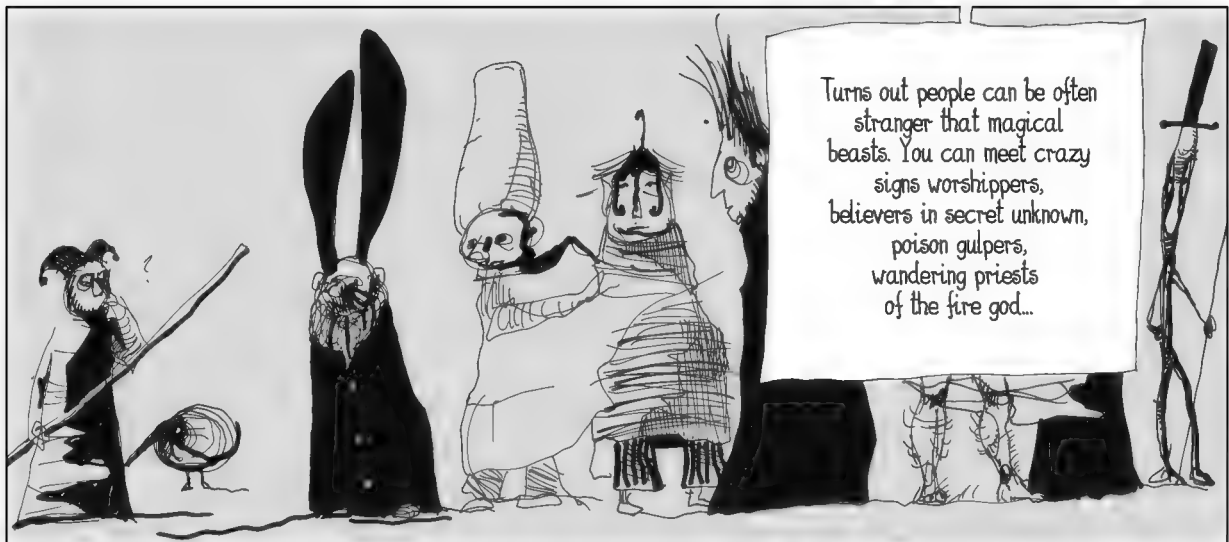
??

?

That village was attacked
by twelve-headed dragon.
He took souls of everybody.
The sole survivor was a farmhand,
Rankki, only because he was
grazing Mserks on the meadows.



Rankki embarked on a quest of saving his folk.
However it wasn't that easy, since the world
isn't exactly as our, or his village.



Turns out people can be often
stranger than magical
beasts. You can meet crazy
signs worshippers,
believers in secret unknown,
poison gulpers,
wandering priests
of the fire god...



Besides the common folk,
there are also mighty lords,
keeping vampires in their castles
so they can charm
all the disobedient ones.



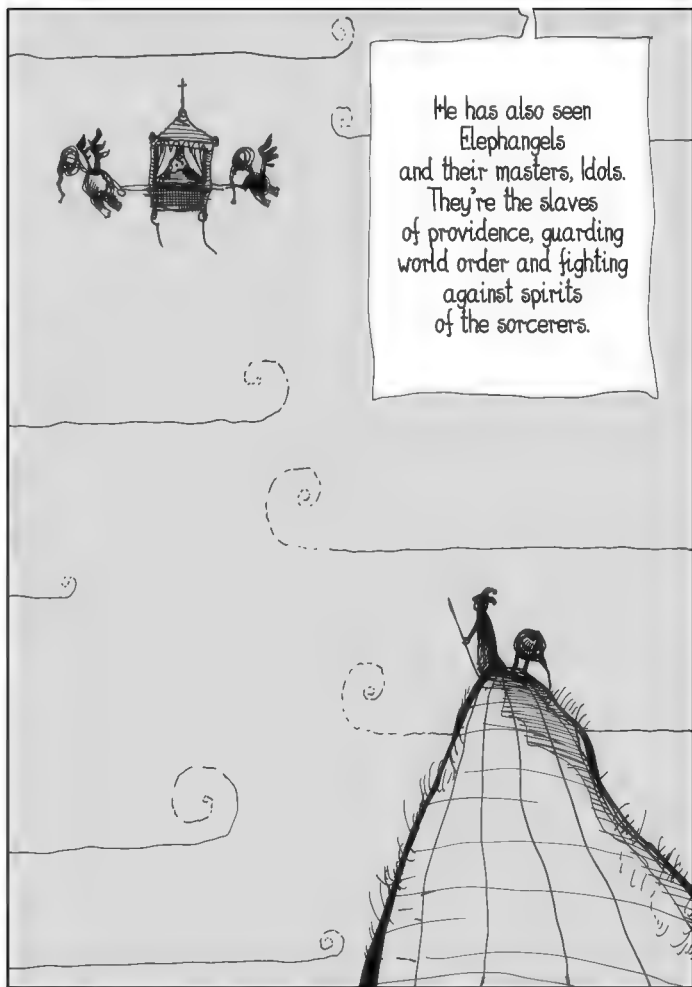
But the world isn't only
a realm of men.
There are also morphs
living here...



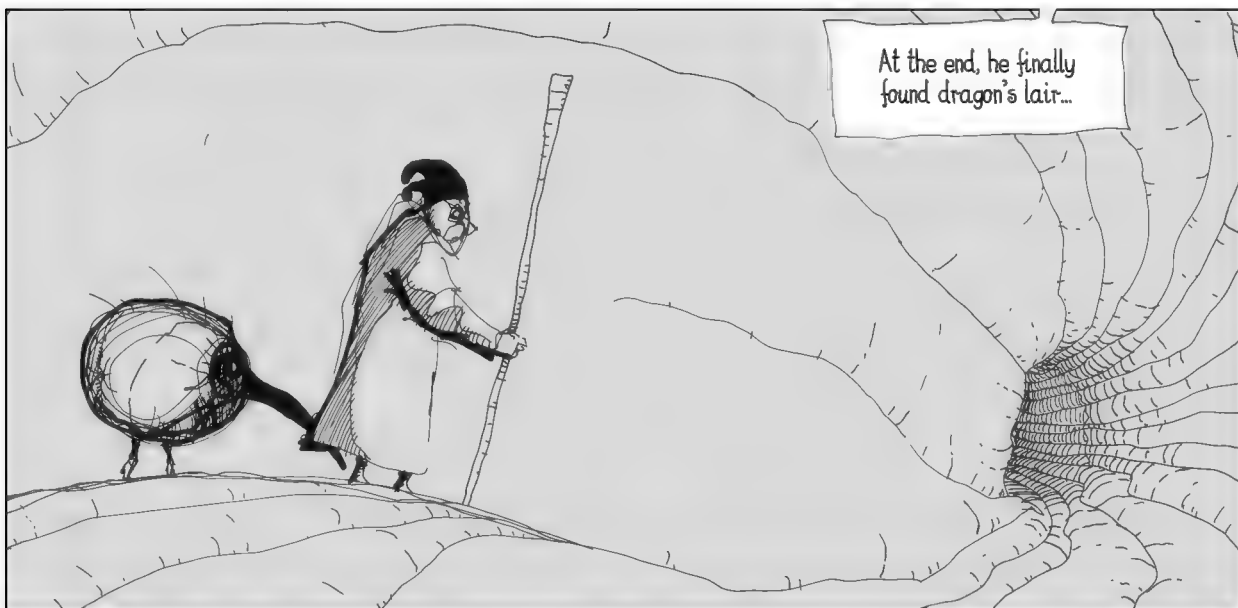
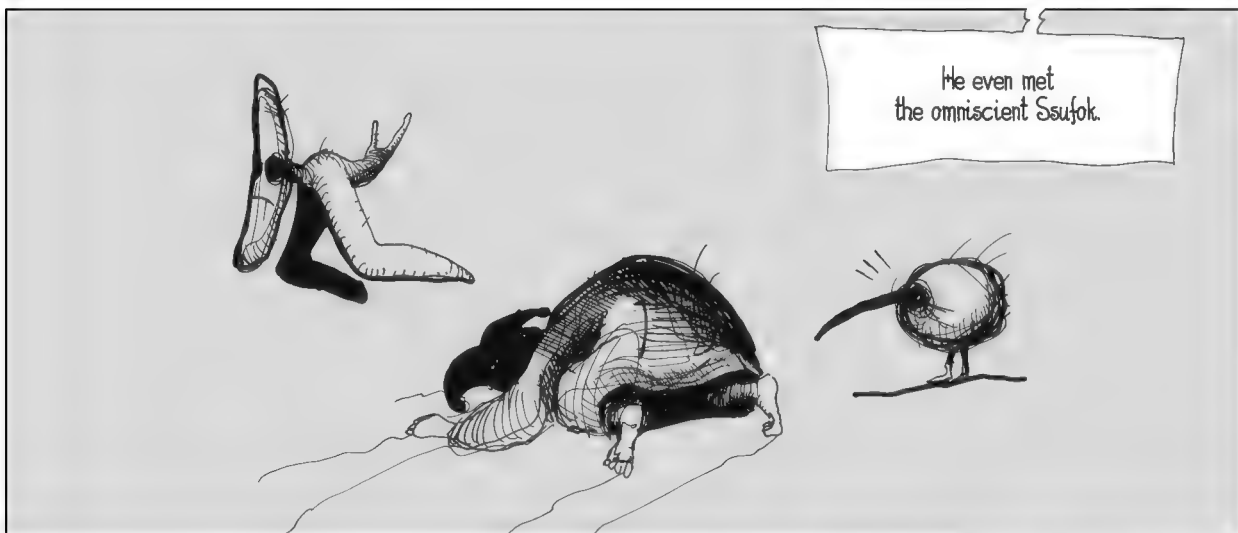
Rankki met
giants and dwarves...



He found escaped nightmares,
Lepires and Mores
in the dark woods...



He has also seen
Elephangels
and their masters, Idols.
They're the slaves
of providence, guarding
world order and fighting
against spirits
of the sorcerers.





And so Rankki stood ground
in a fight against the dragon
for souls of his folk...



And then?

What happened next?

Go on, grandpa!

And the dragon?



And the dragon
blew him away.





Oh, it's going
to rain.
Lepirs are
flying low.

How
would
you
know?

The rain
is coming.

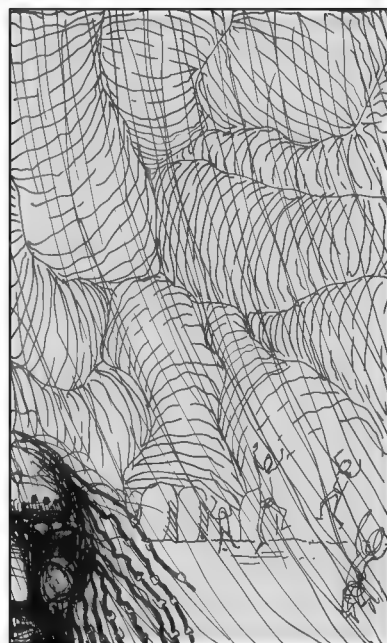
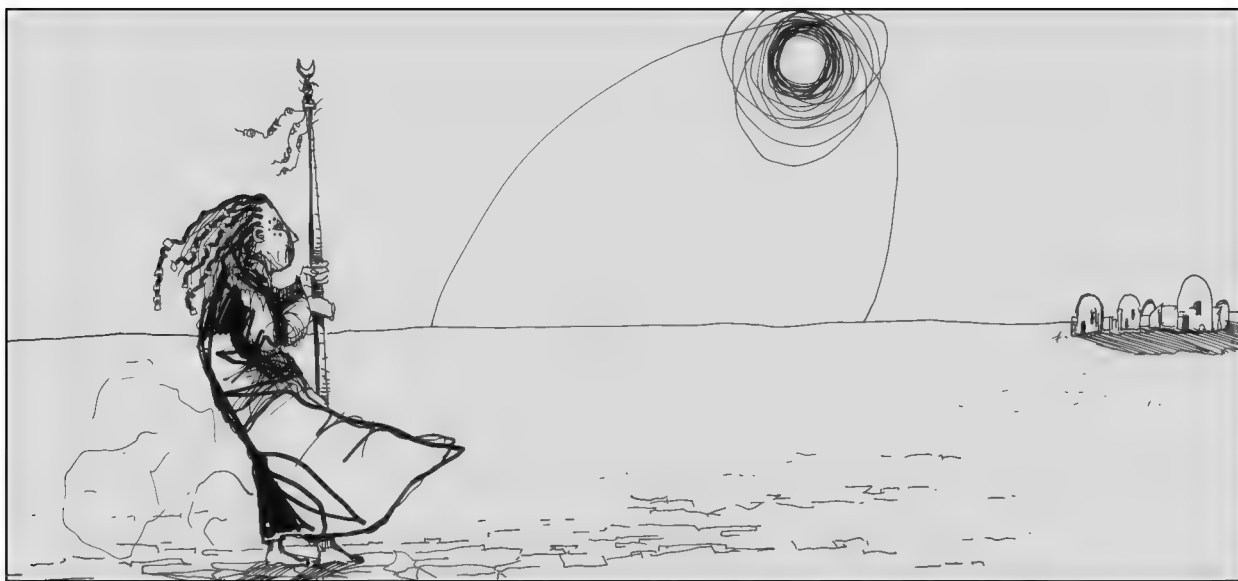
People
are looking
up on us.

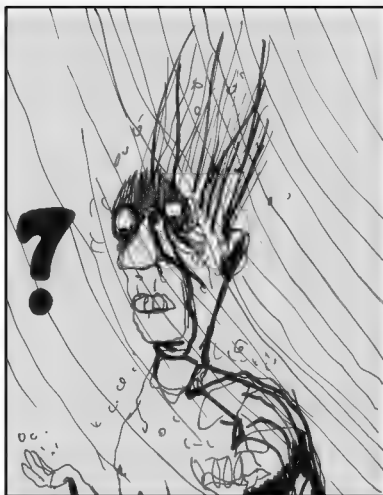
It always
rains
afterwards.

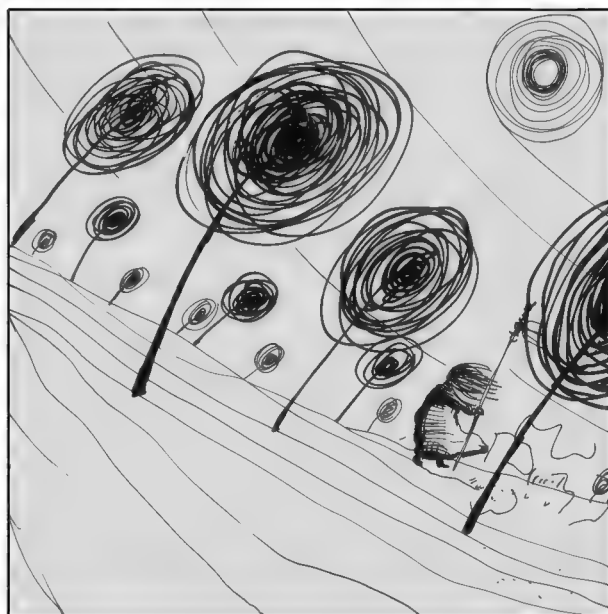
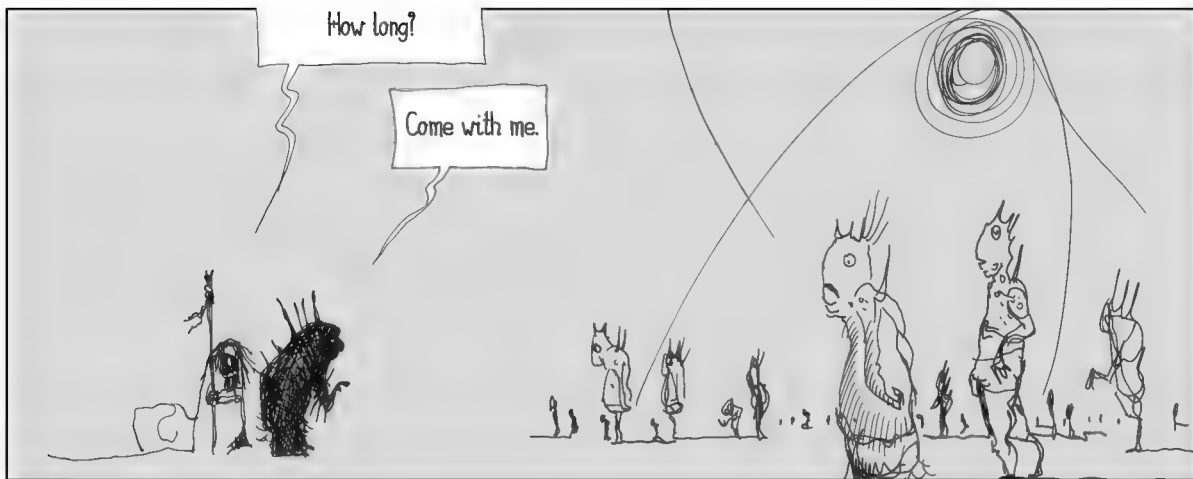
All right,
boss finished
bathing.

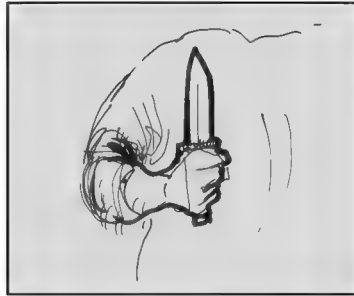
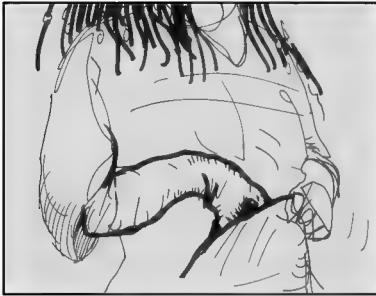
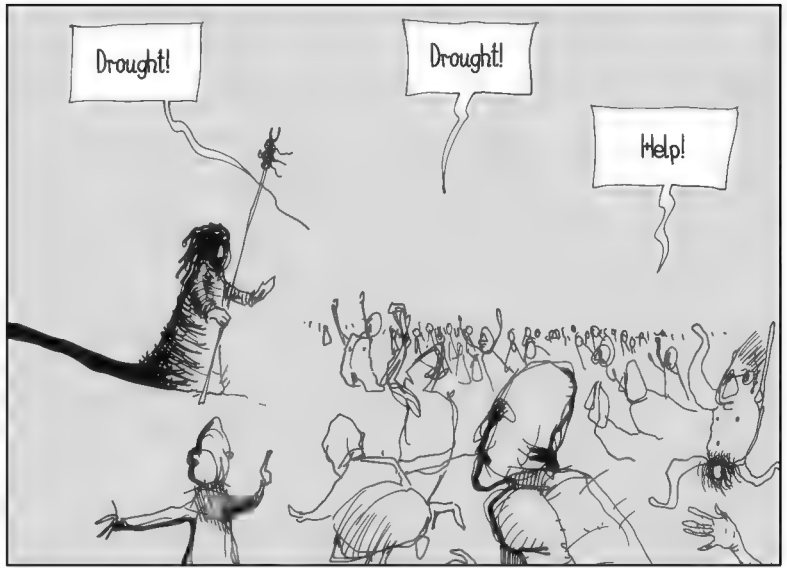
Pull the plug!

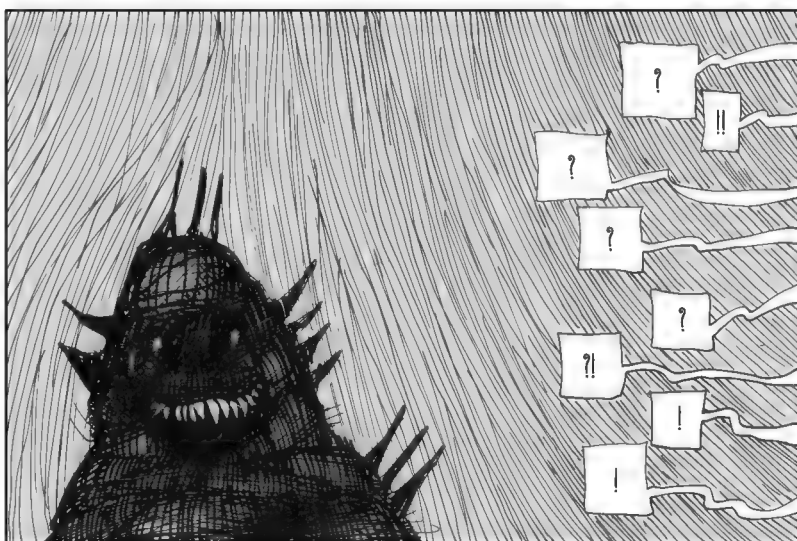
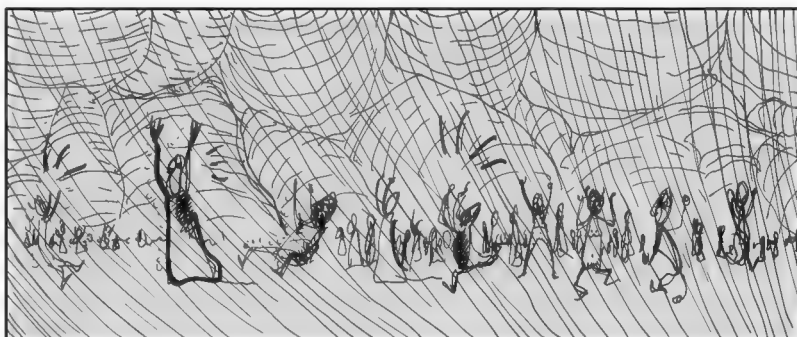
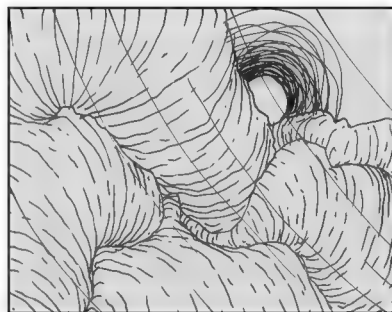
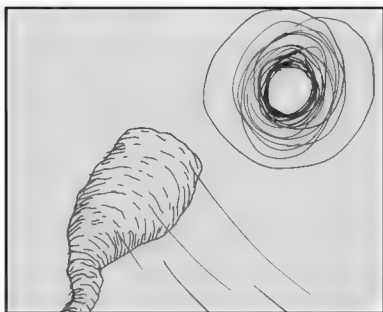
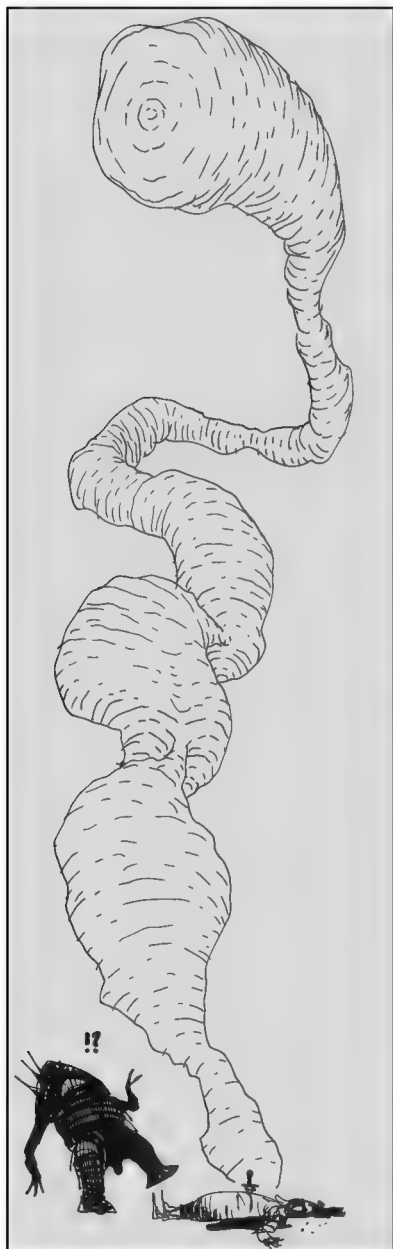




















Roll over,
I will cut
your bonds.

Once you regain feeling in your hands
and legs run as fast as you can towards
that white glow. When you enter the glow,
you will leave this forest.



But you...

We are you.
And you are us.

But you...

We are you.
And you are us.

Come with us.

A man searches for himself
throughout his whole life.
And he runs away from
himself as well.
People often do both those
things at the same time.



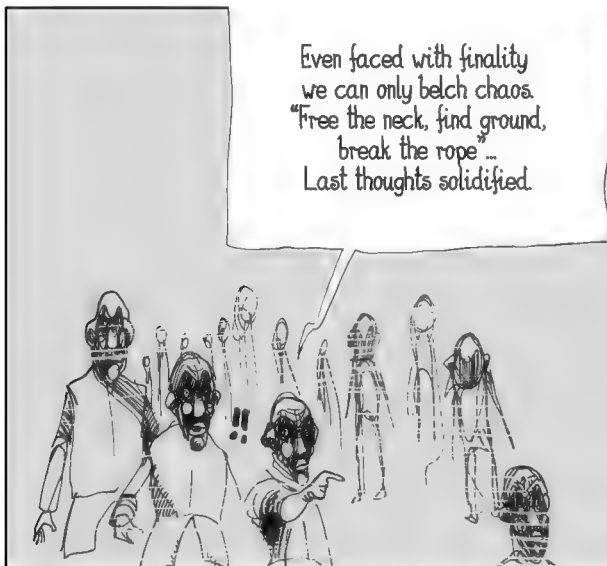
Every human is just
a dream about himself.

We are you,
or those who
might have been.
All that we gained
and all that we
lost.

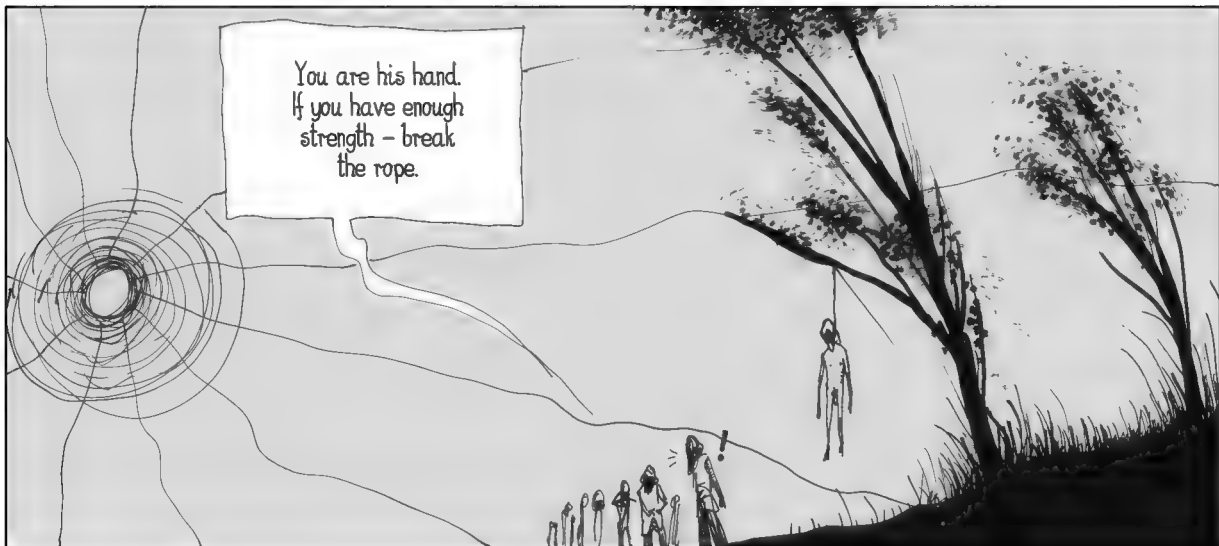


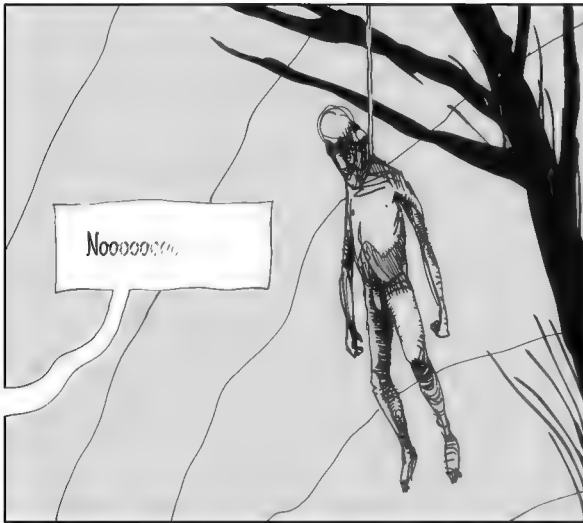
Do everything
at once!

Even faced with finality
we can only belch chaos.
"Free the neck, find ground,
break the rope" ...
Last thoughts solidified.

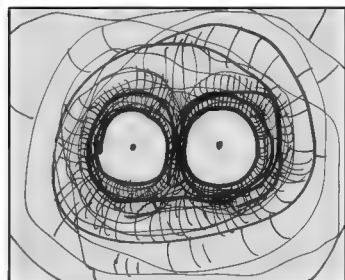
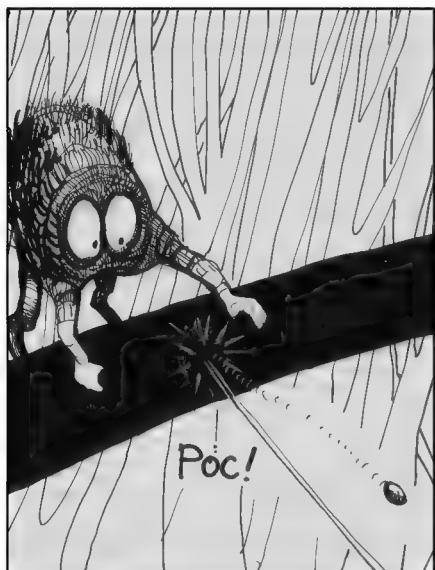
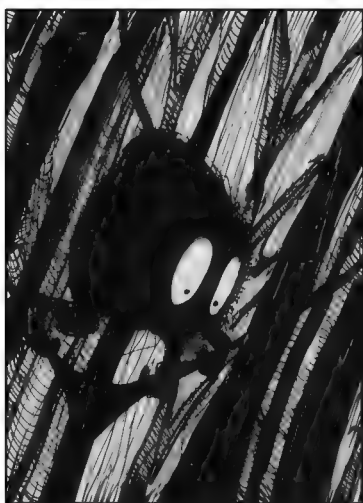


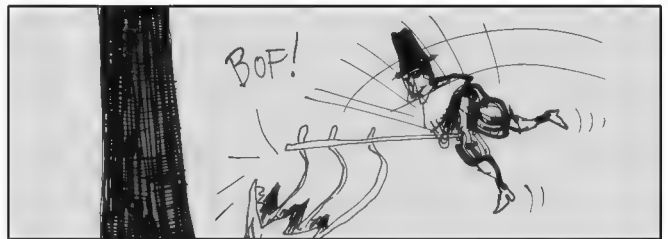
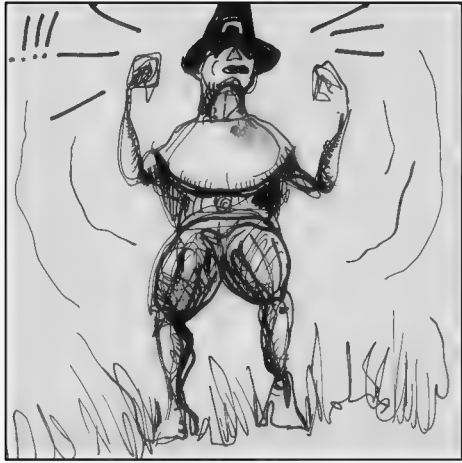
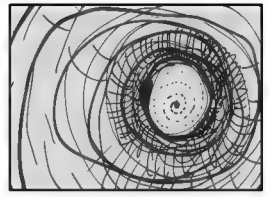
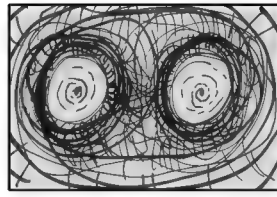
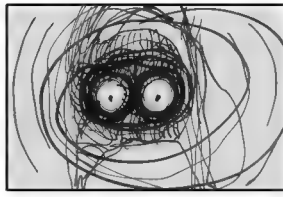
You are his hand.
If you have enough
strength - break
the rope.

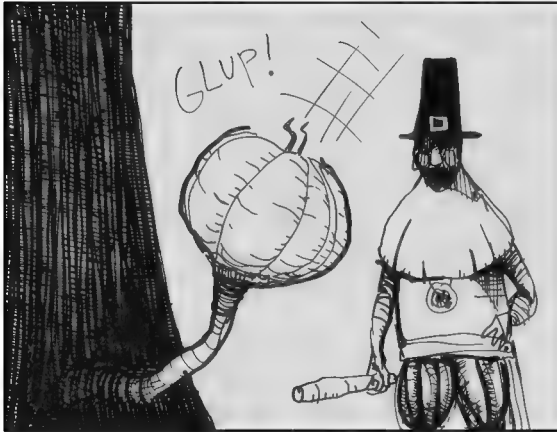
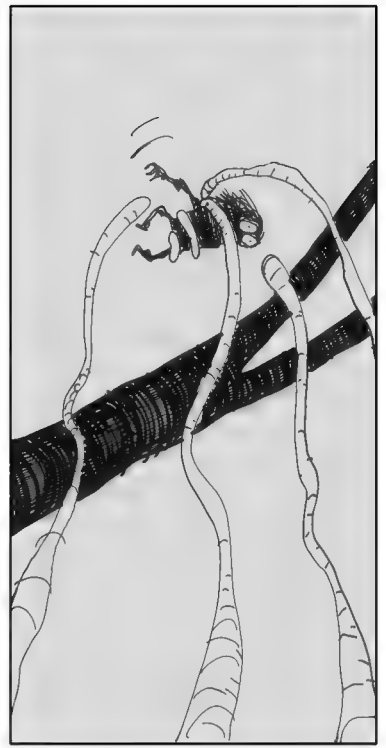


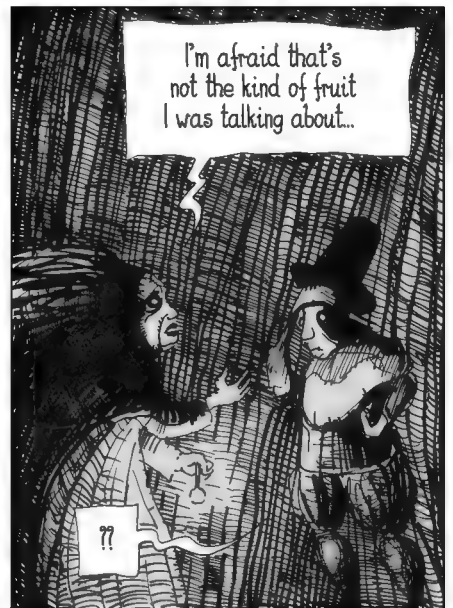
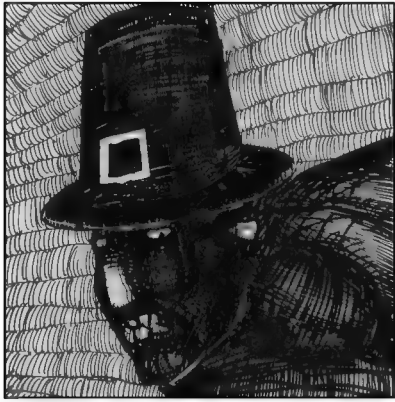
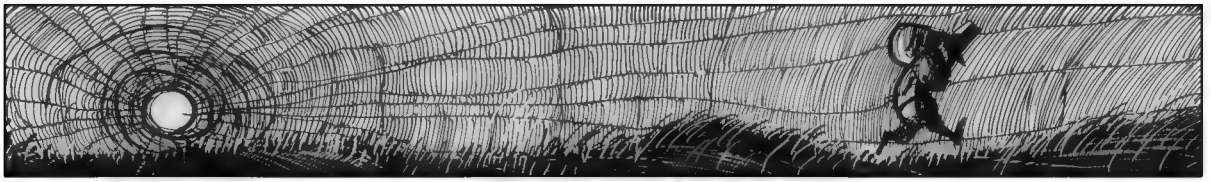






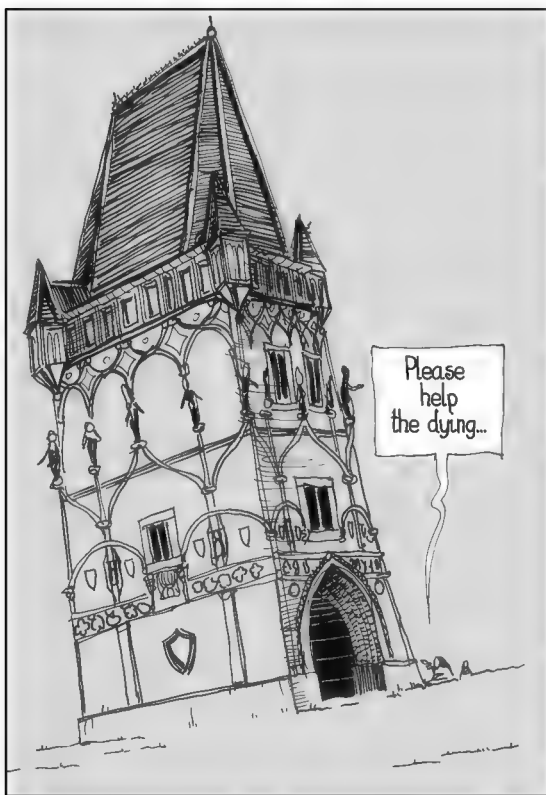


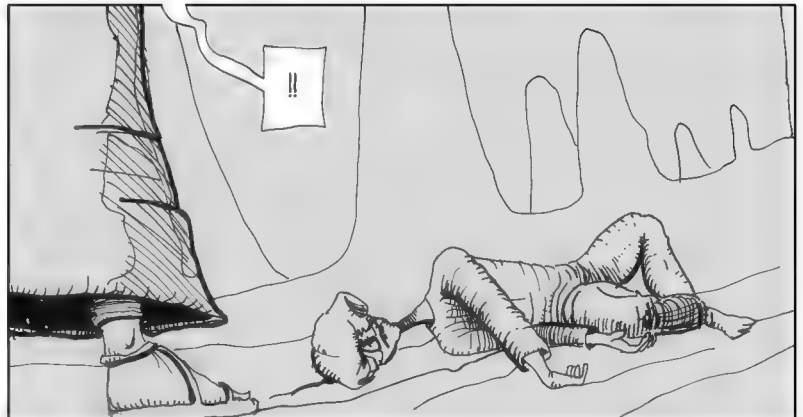
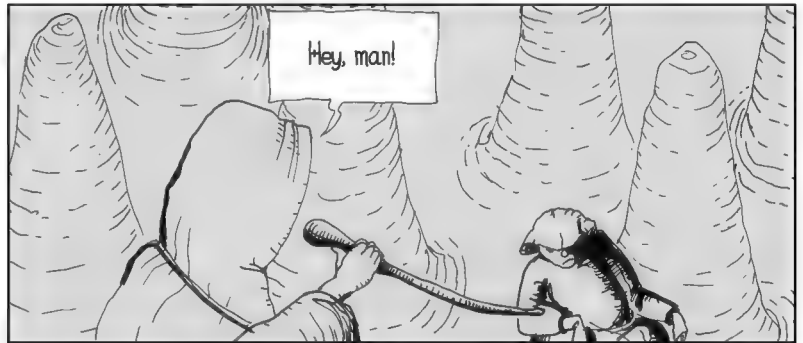
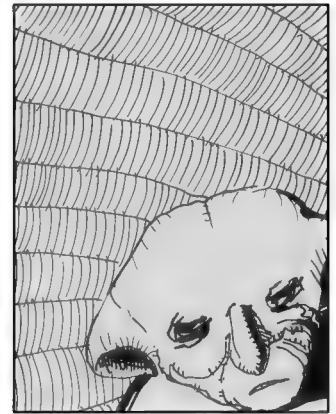
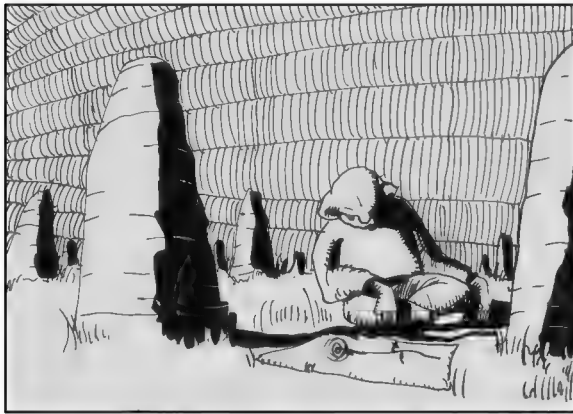
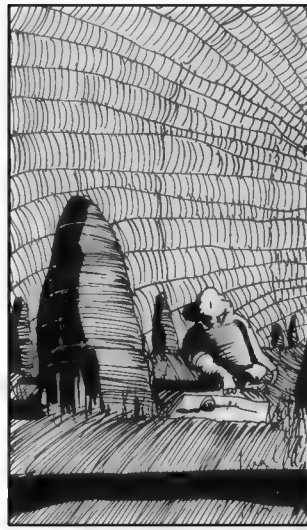


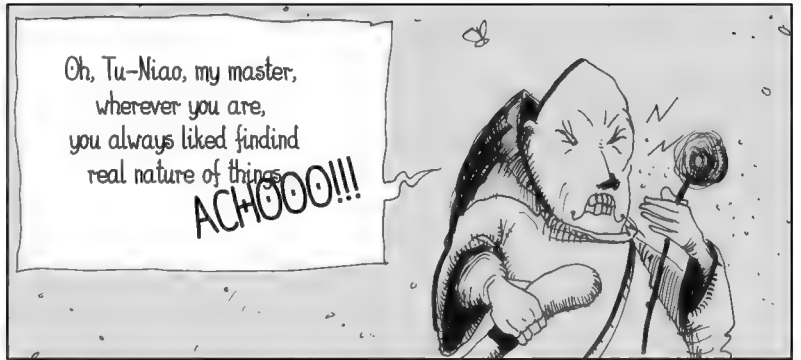
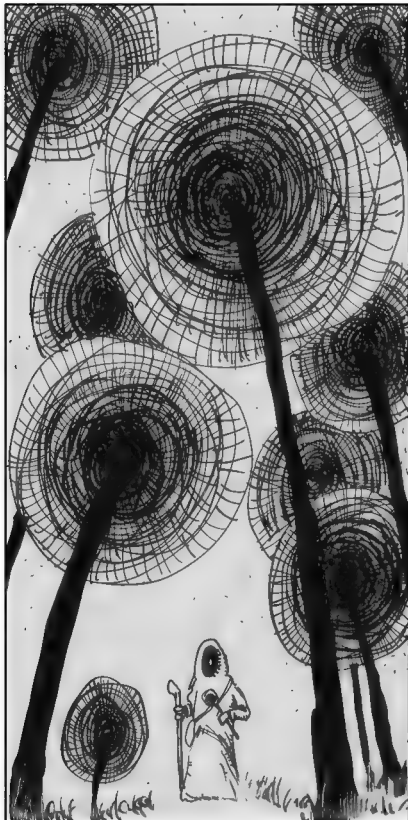
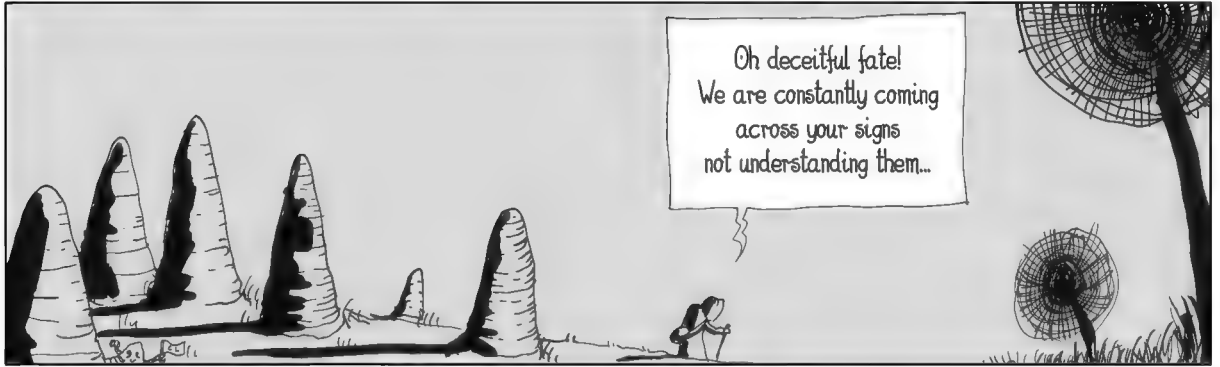




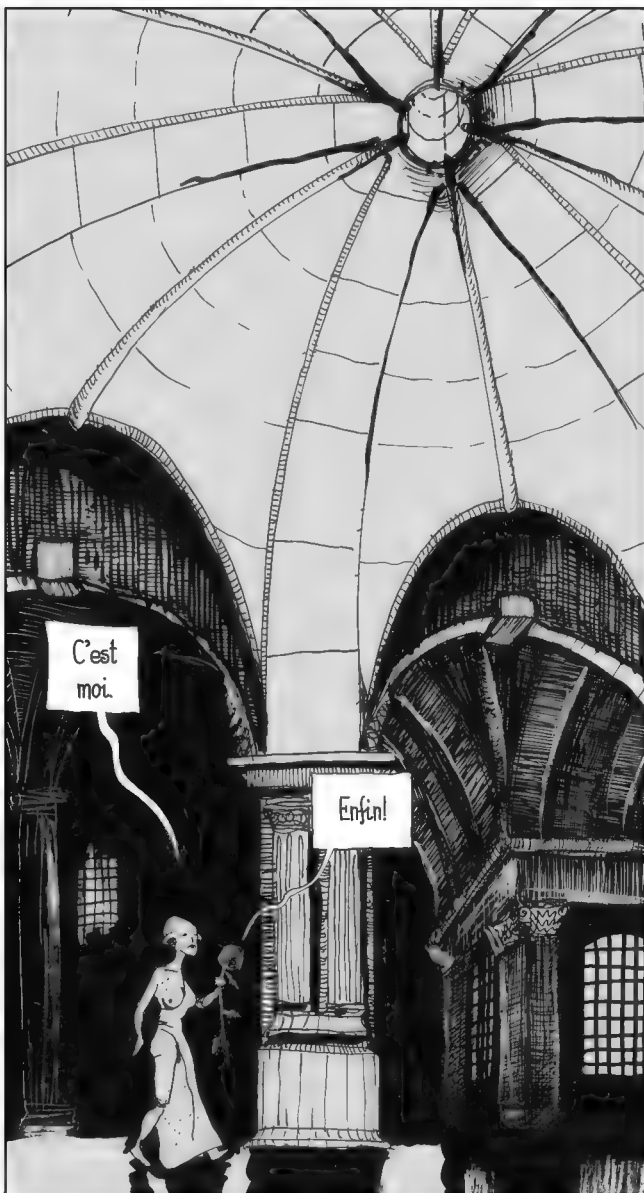
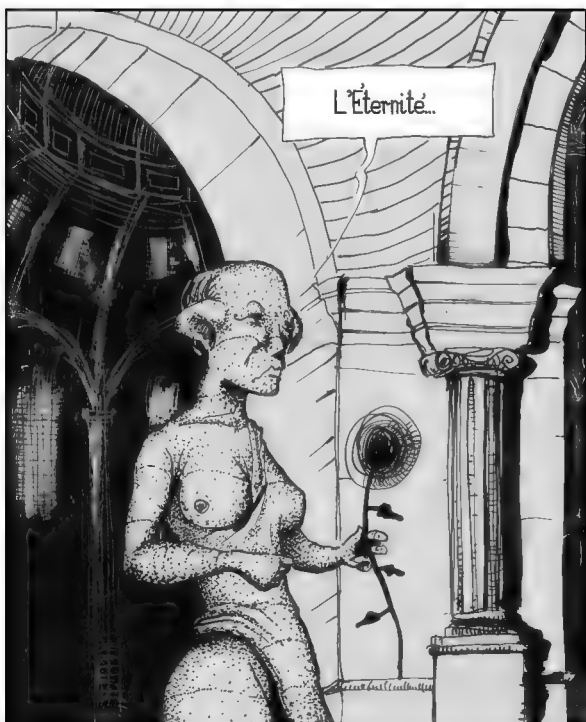




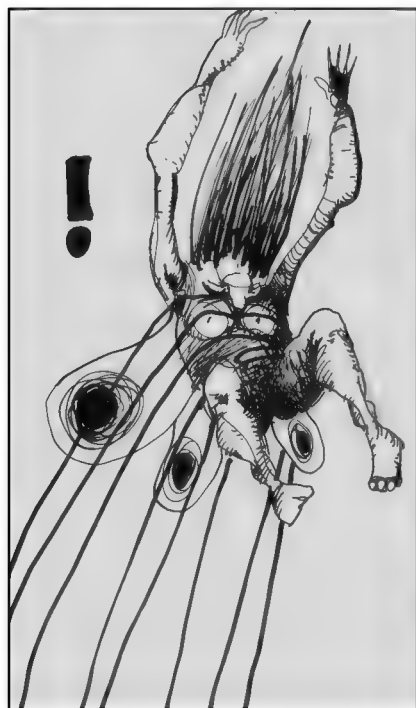
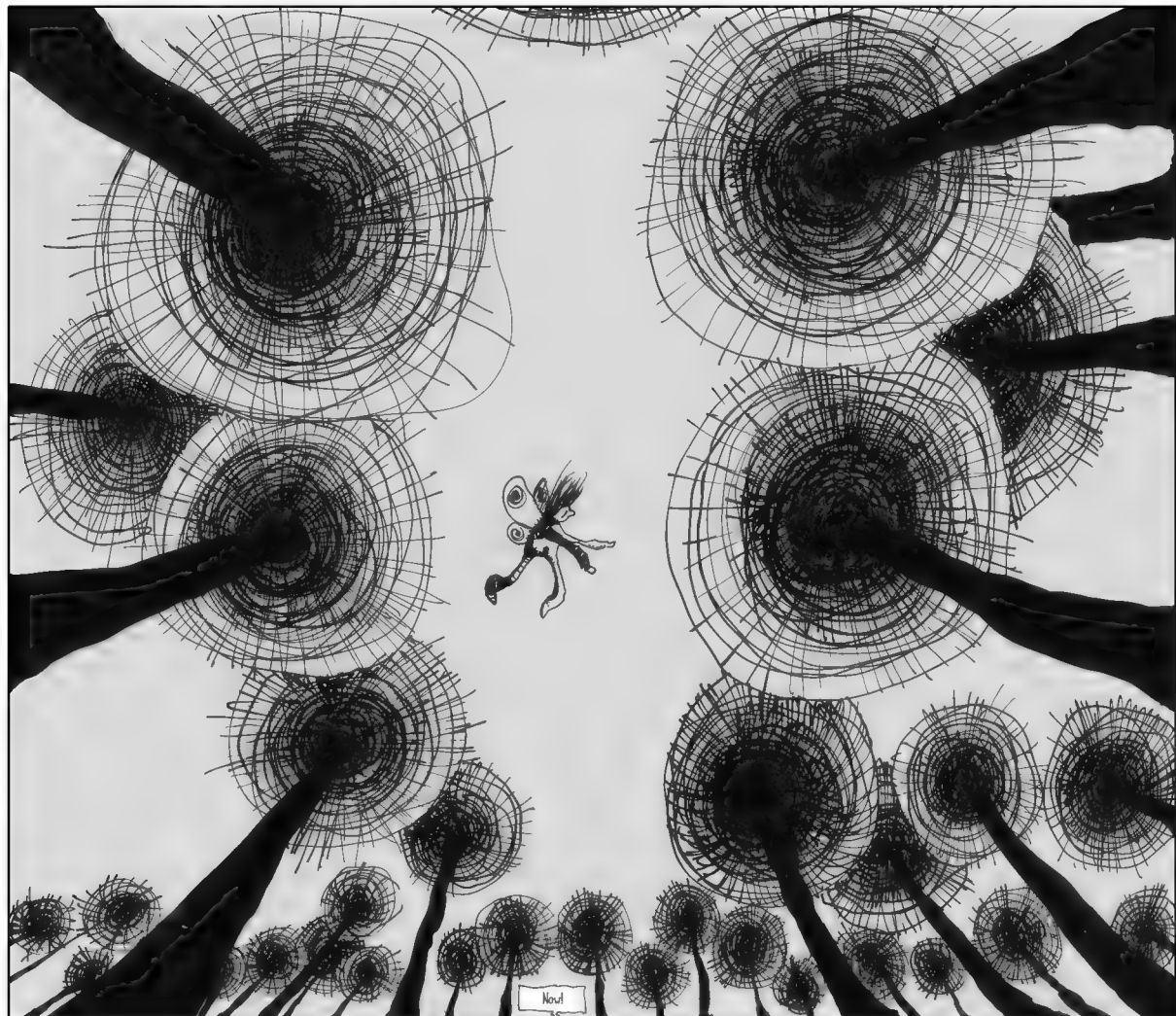


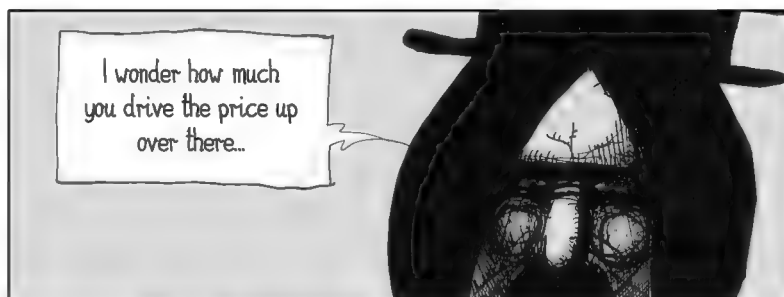


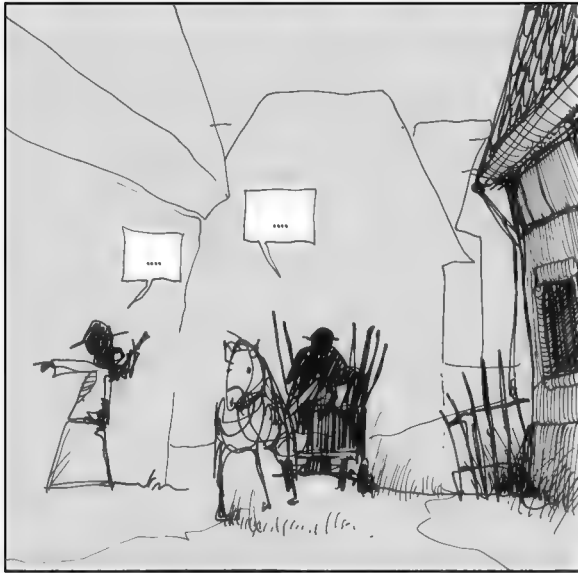
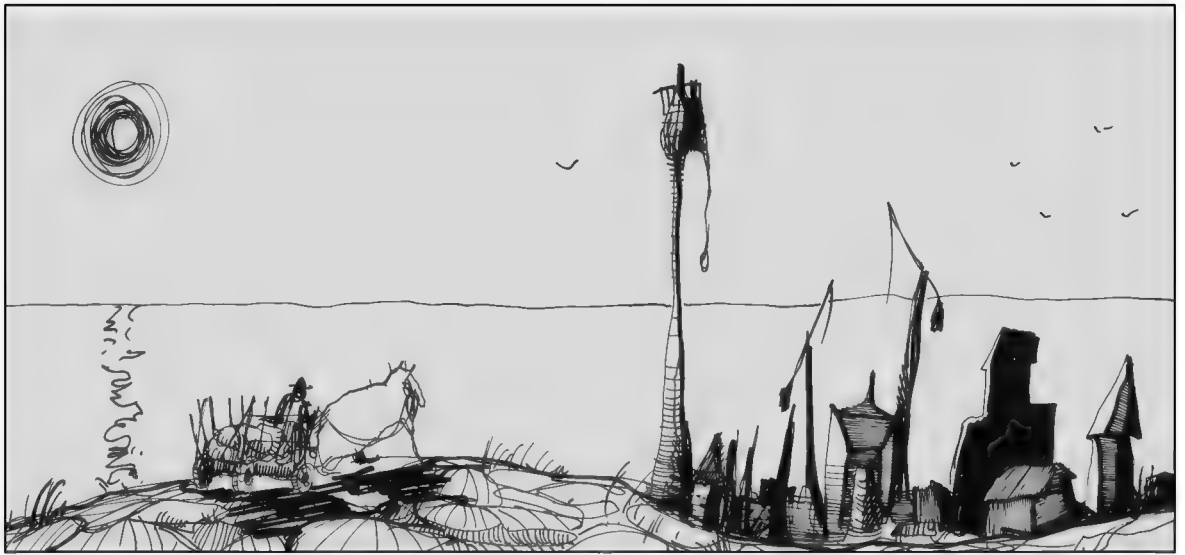










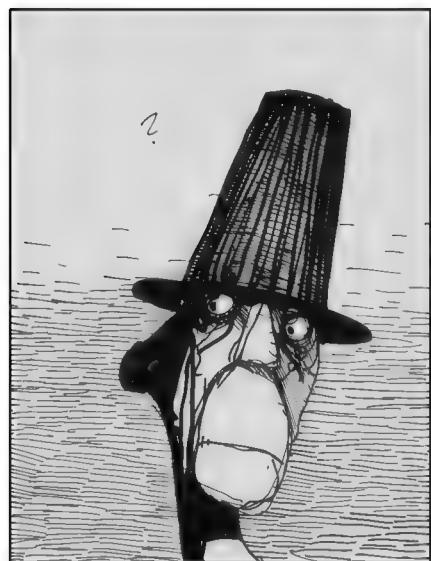


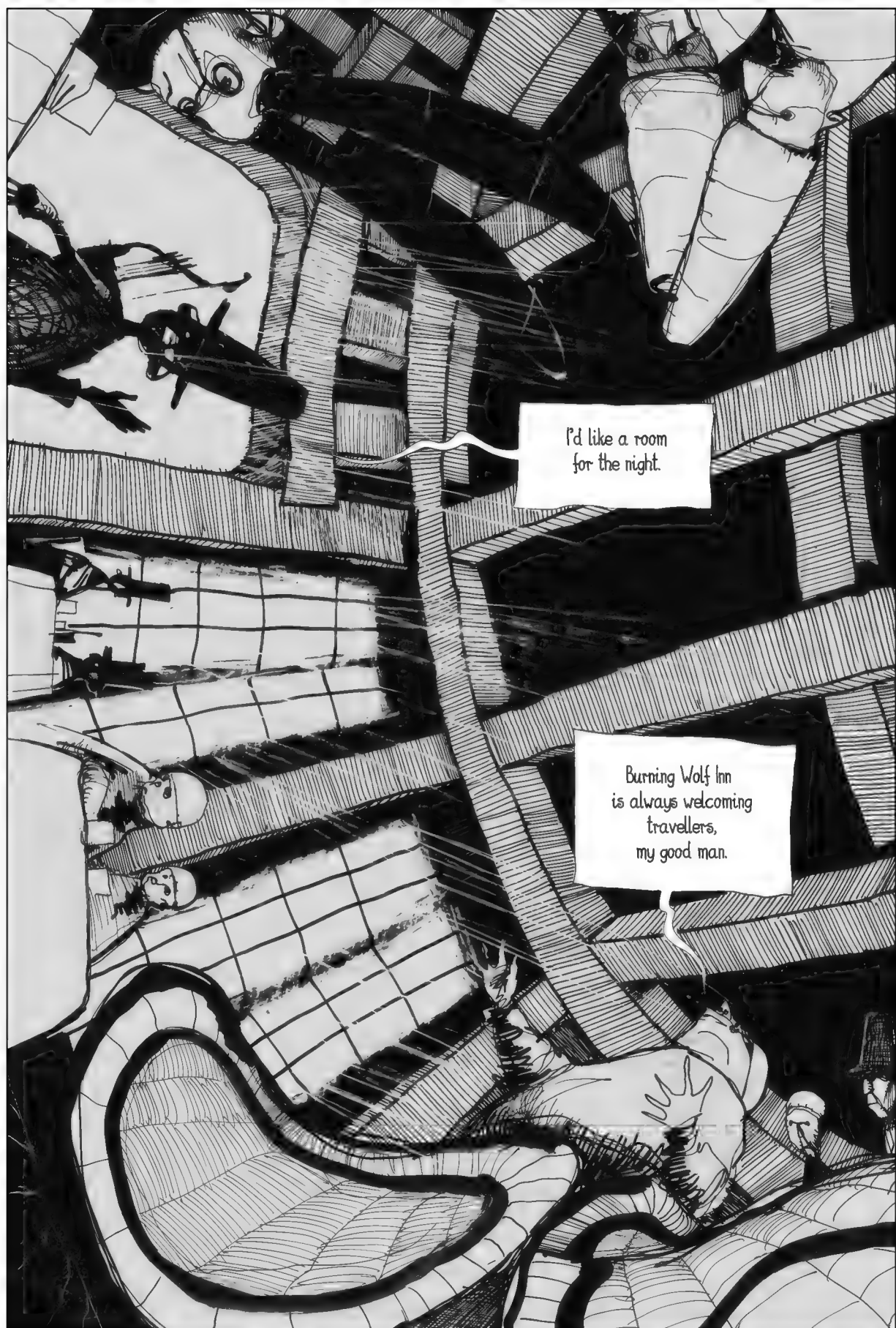






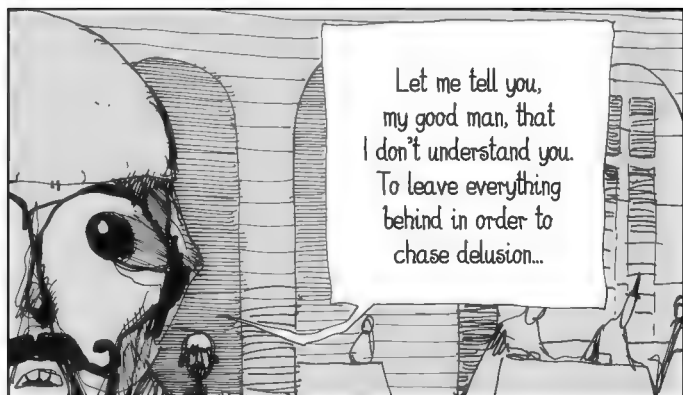
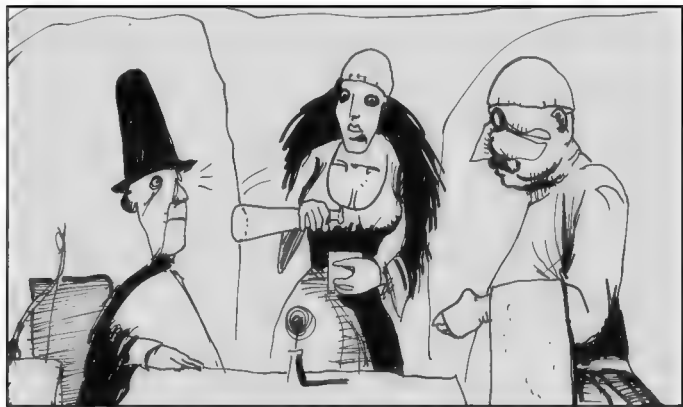
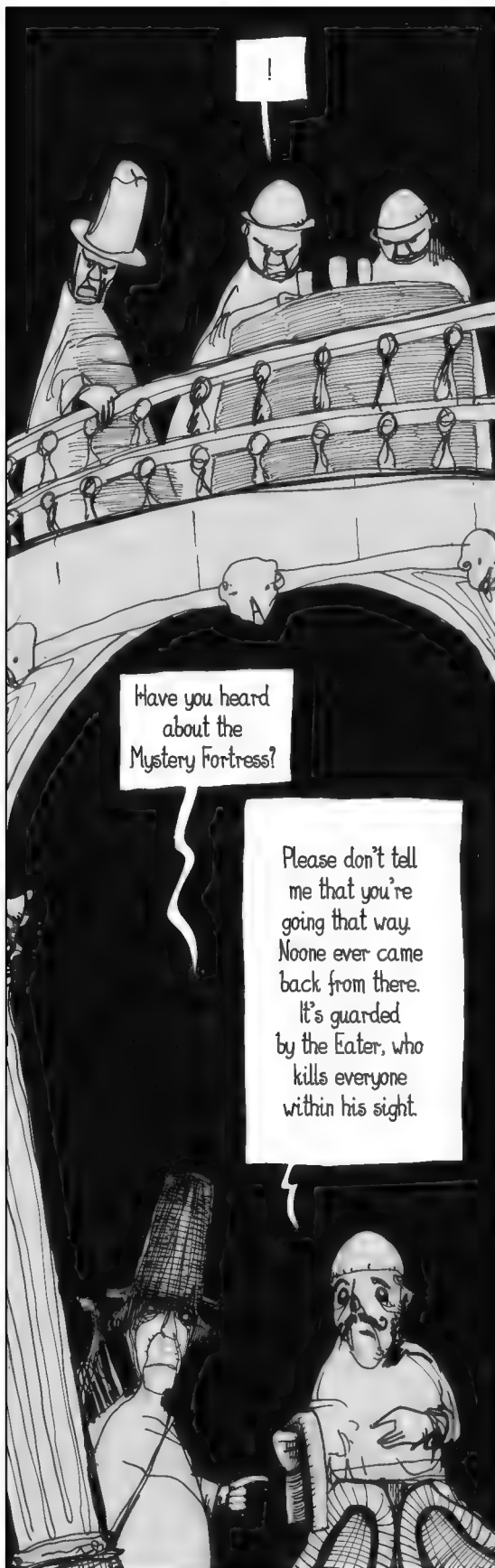




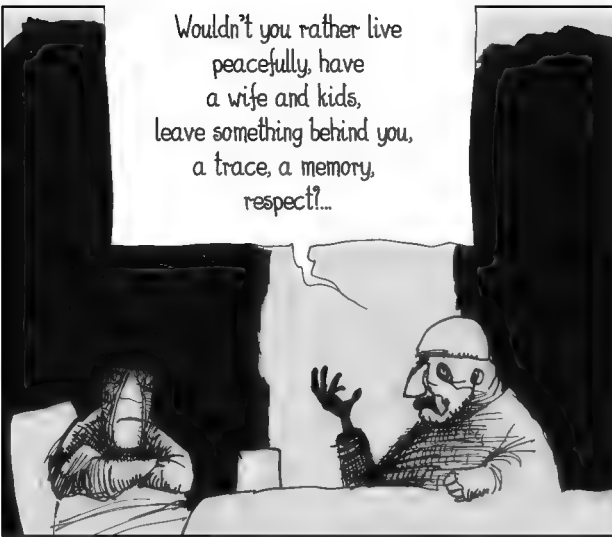


I'd like a room
for the night.

Burning Wolf Inn
is always welcoming
travellers,
my good man.



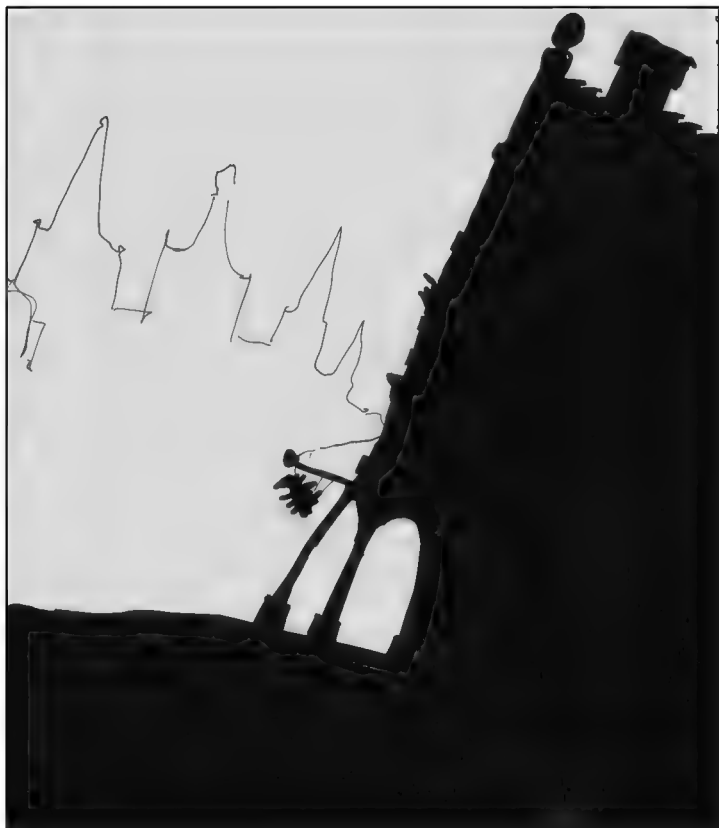
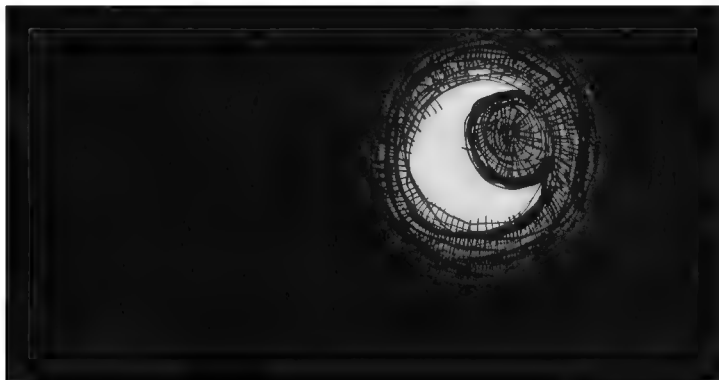
Wouldn't you rather live
peacefully, have
a wife and kids,
leave something behind you,
a trace, a memory,
respect!...

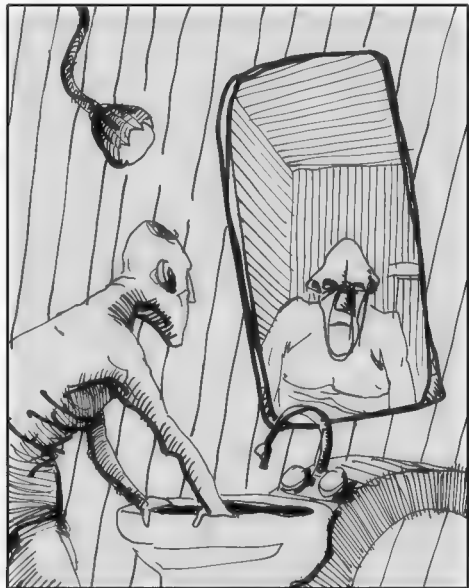


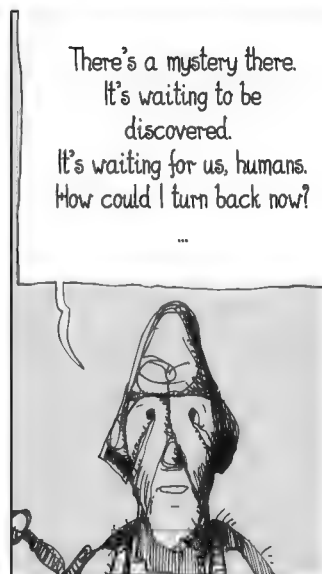
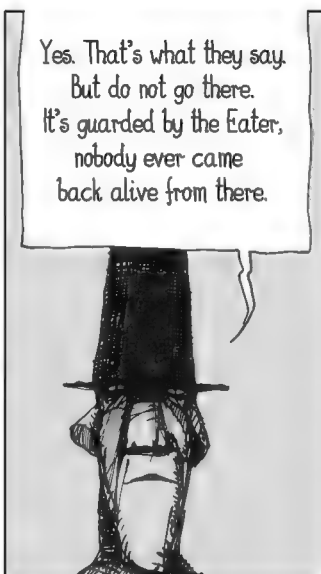
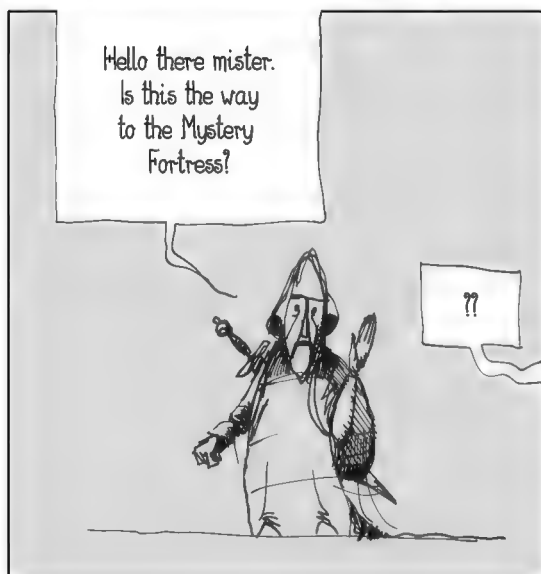
Tell me about that Eater.



What can
I tell you?...
I live in
the real world.

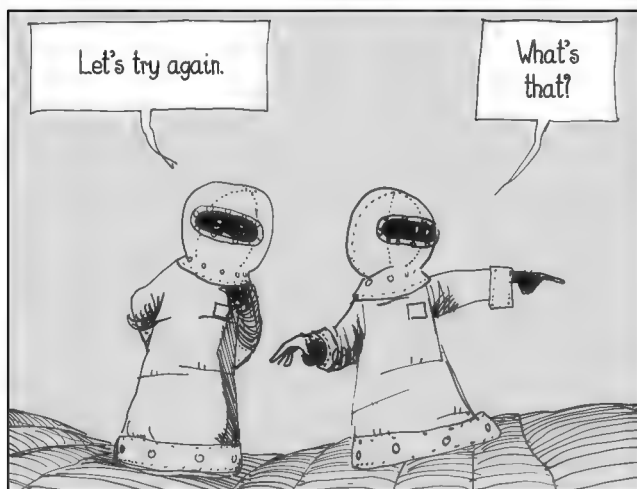
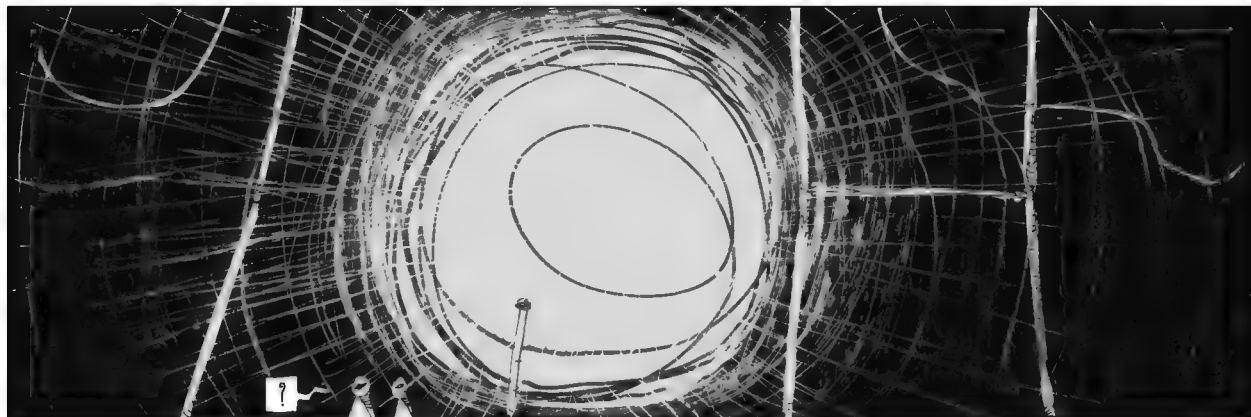
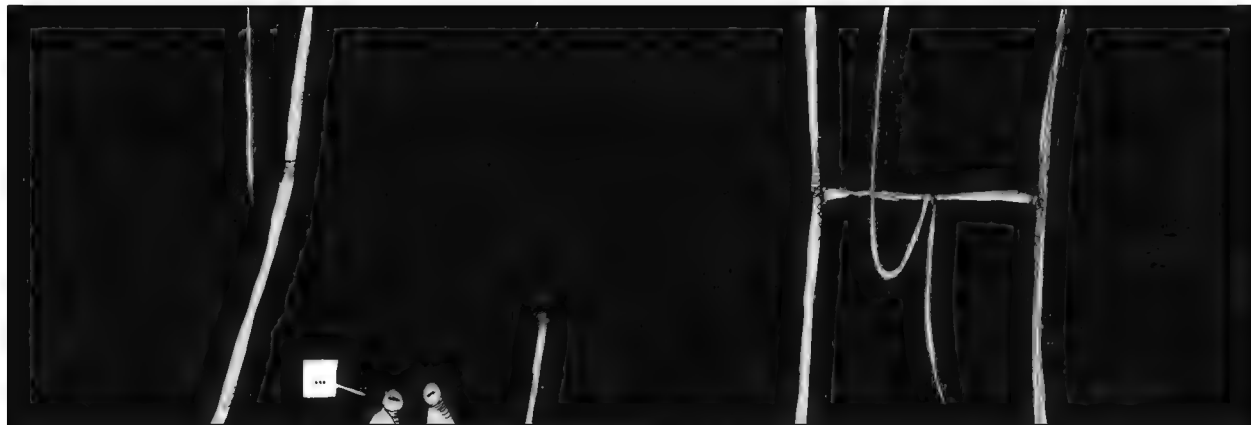








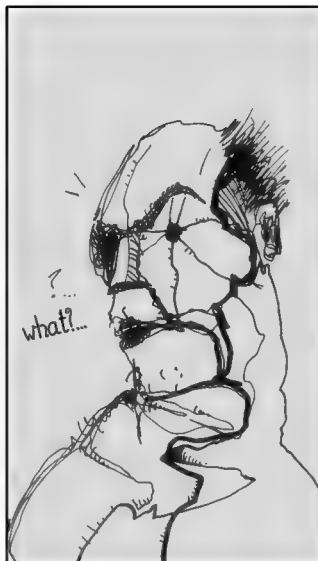




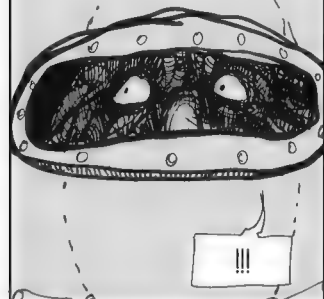
What are you
doing here?!



what?...



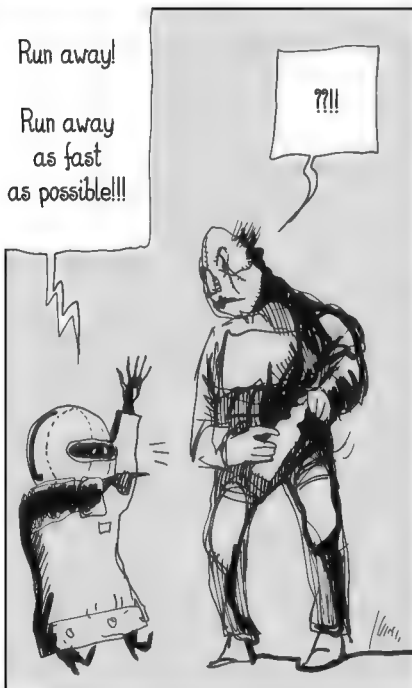
Caution!
Another leak
is coming up!



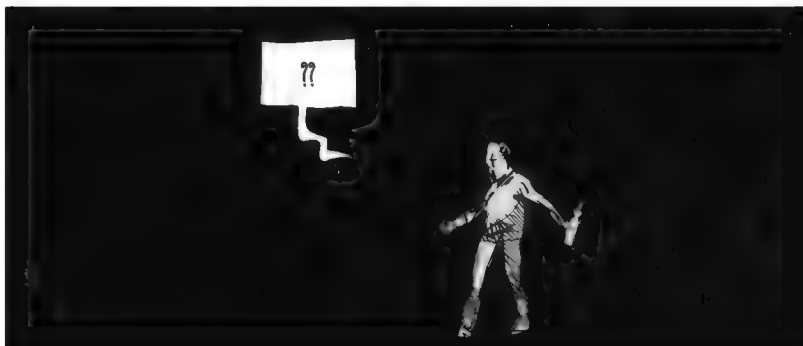
Run away!

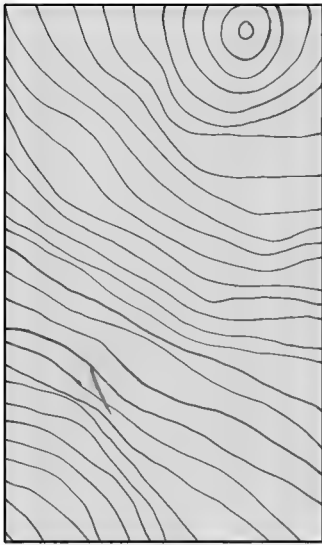
??!!

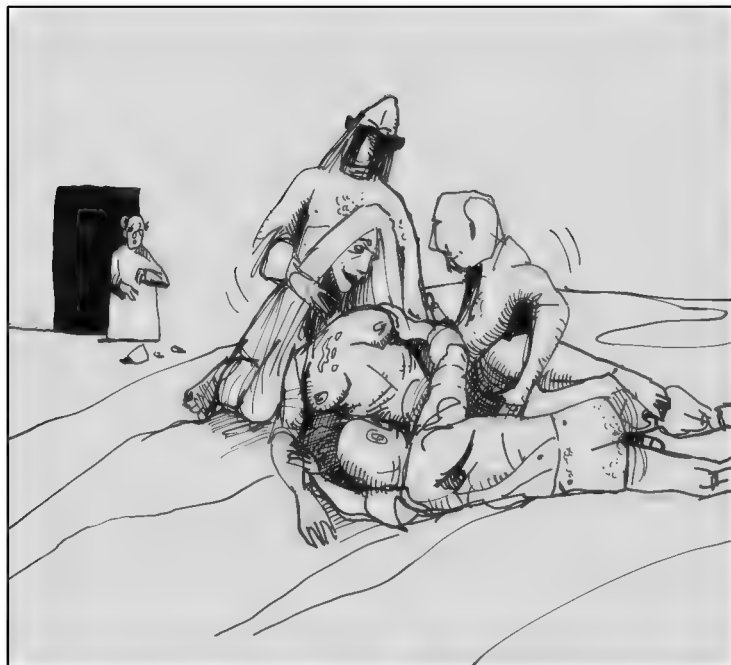
Run away
as fast
as possible!!!



??







Hope he dies soon.
He lived long enough.

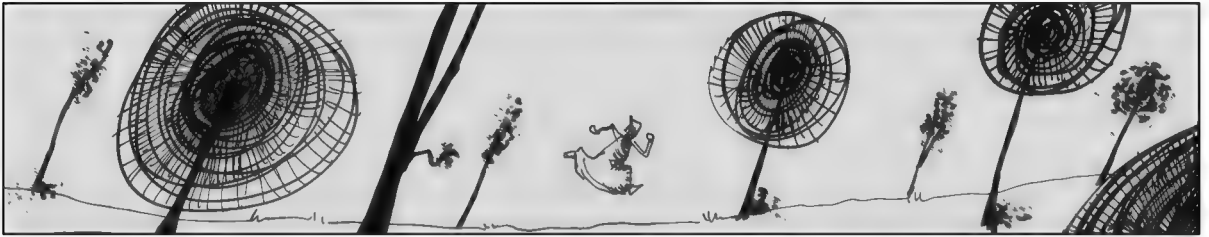
Yeah, his time is up.
He should give us his
wealth and farm,
we know things better
than him.

?

In the end, it's ours by law.
It's our farm.

It will be ours one day.
However... There are
so many accidents
these days. Especially
amongst drunks.
You catch my drift?

Dear gods...



Gods will not
help you.
Thanks to me
you saw
the real world.

?

Who are you?

I'm a traveller
and now I live inside you.

I uncover
the truth
in search of
mysteries.

I look under the skin
of the universe.
Look at your
house now.

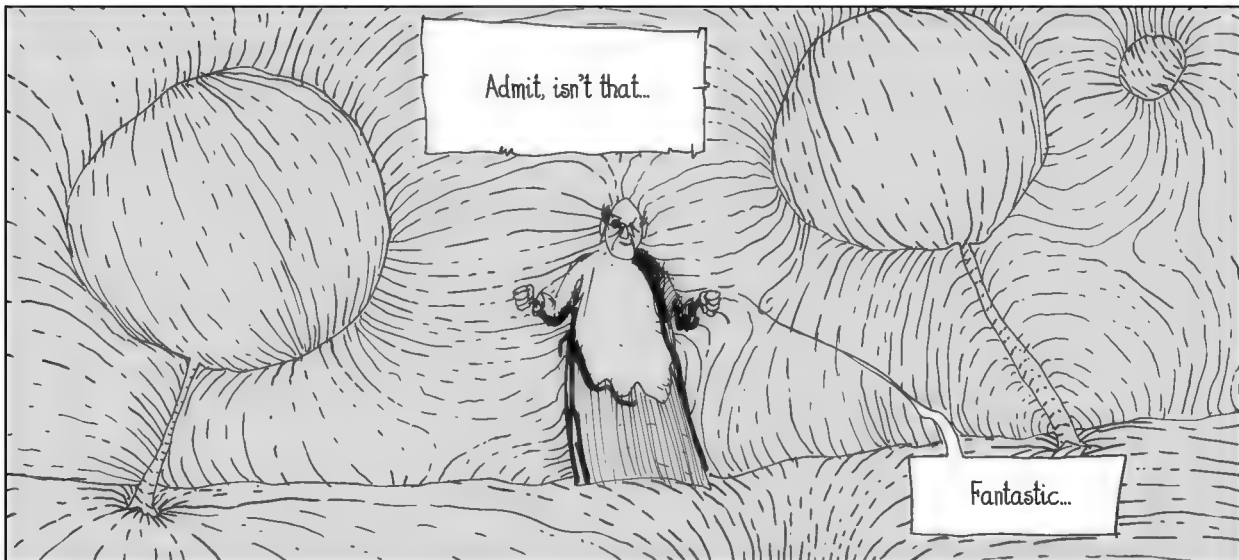
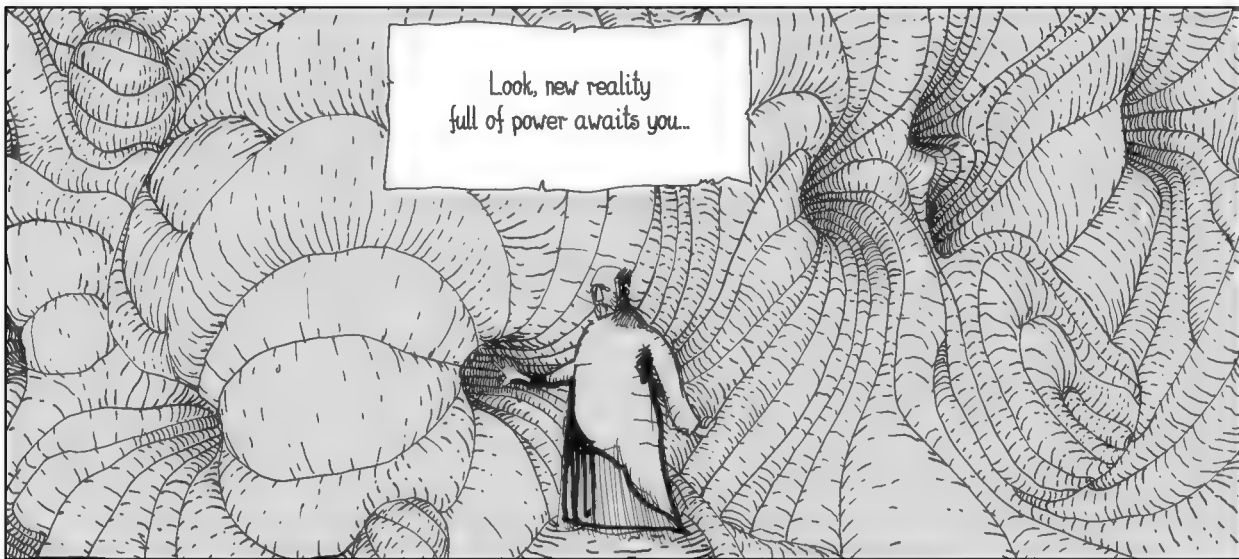
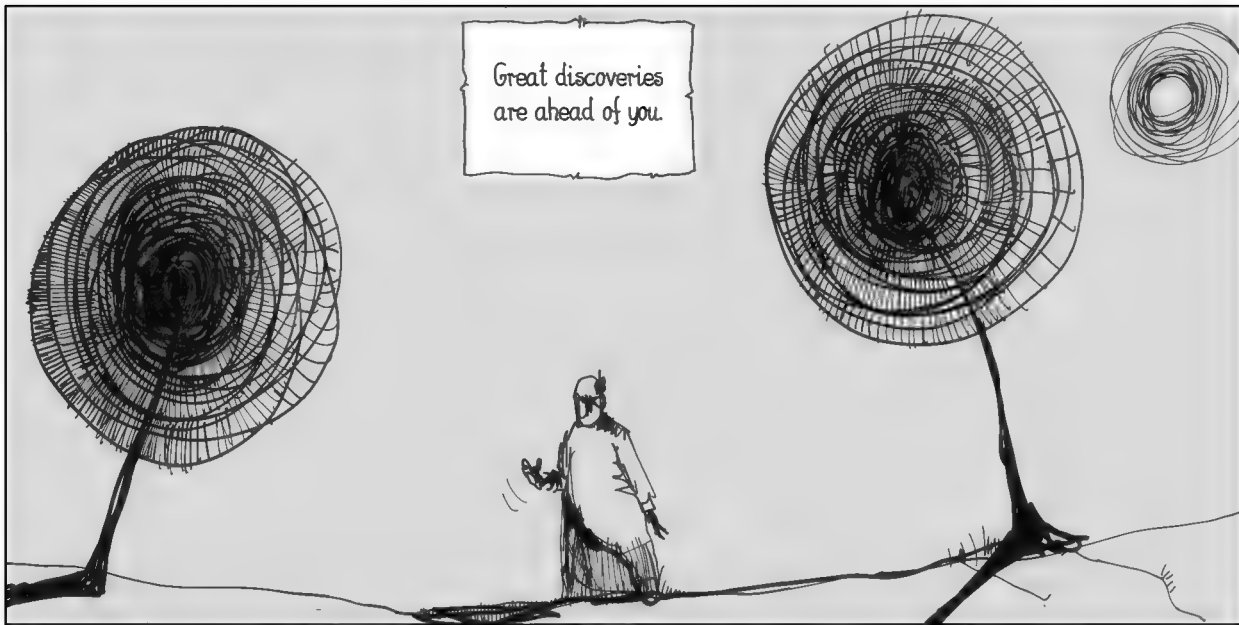
?

Something new and better
awaits you now...

??

But... It was
my home...

That is not
important
anymore.





This is my newest invention.
A machine that brings
harvest abundance.



It will make meadows greener,
creeks will be filled with fish,
tables will be full of food
and pantries will
be overstacked forever!



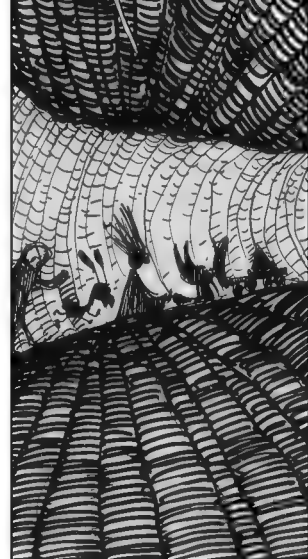
Bravo!

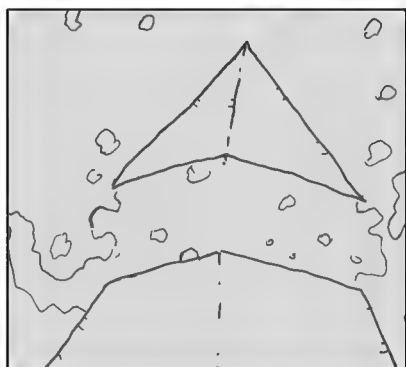
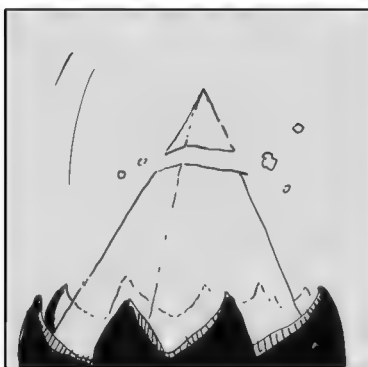
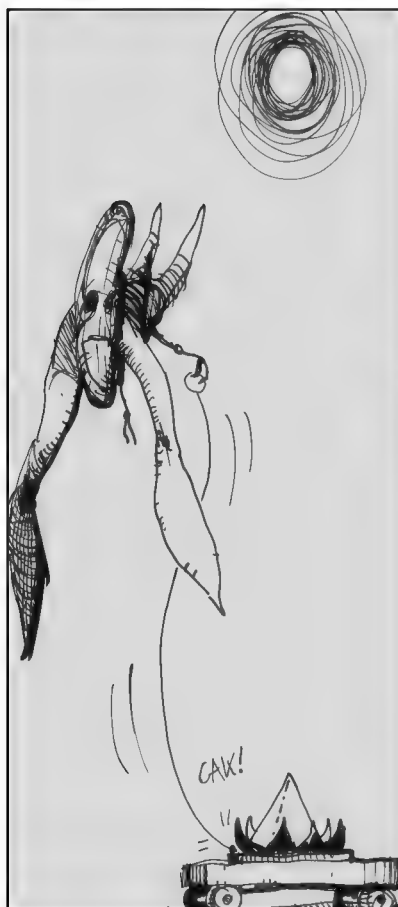
Kudos!

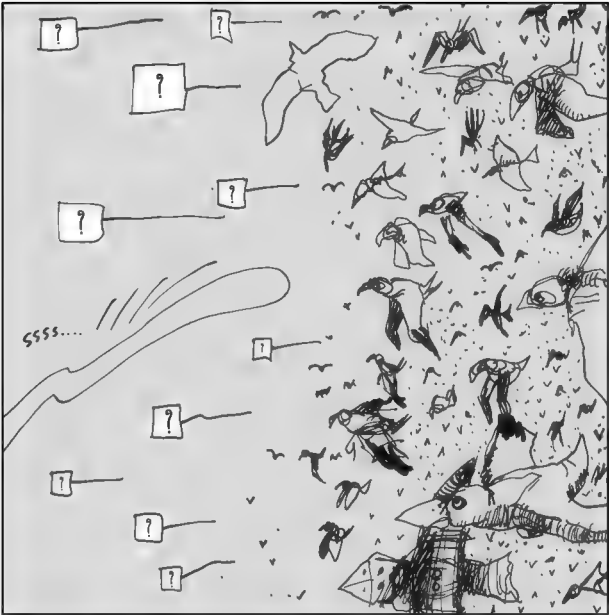
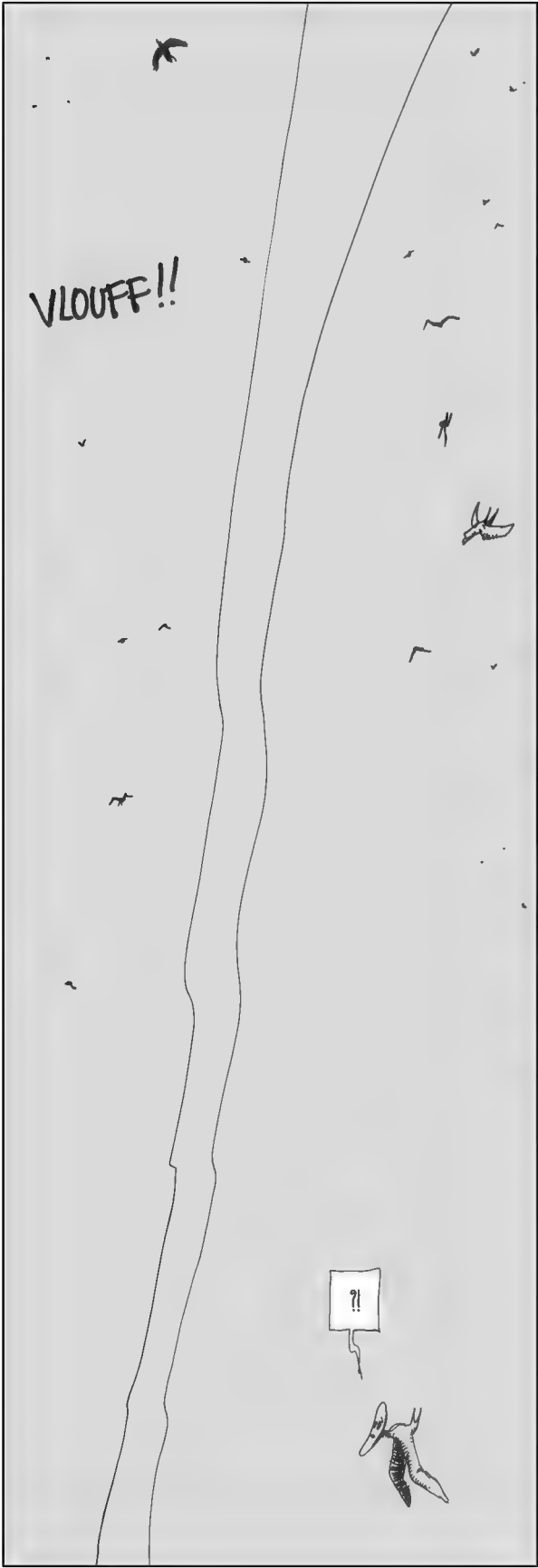
What are we
waiting for?
Fire it up!

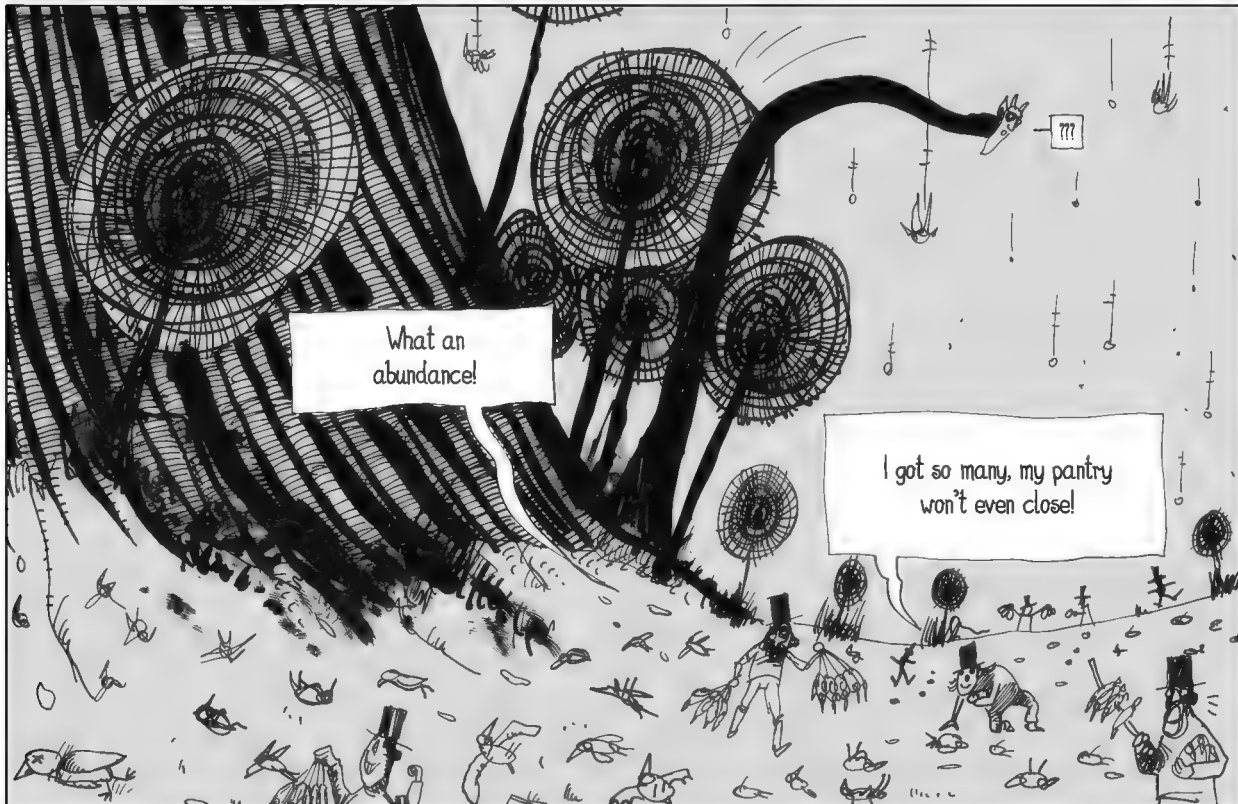
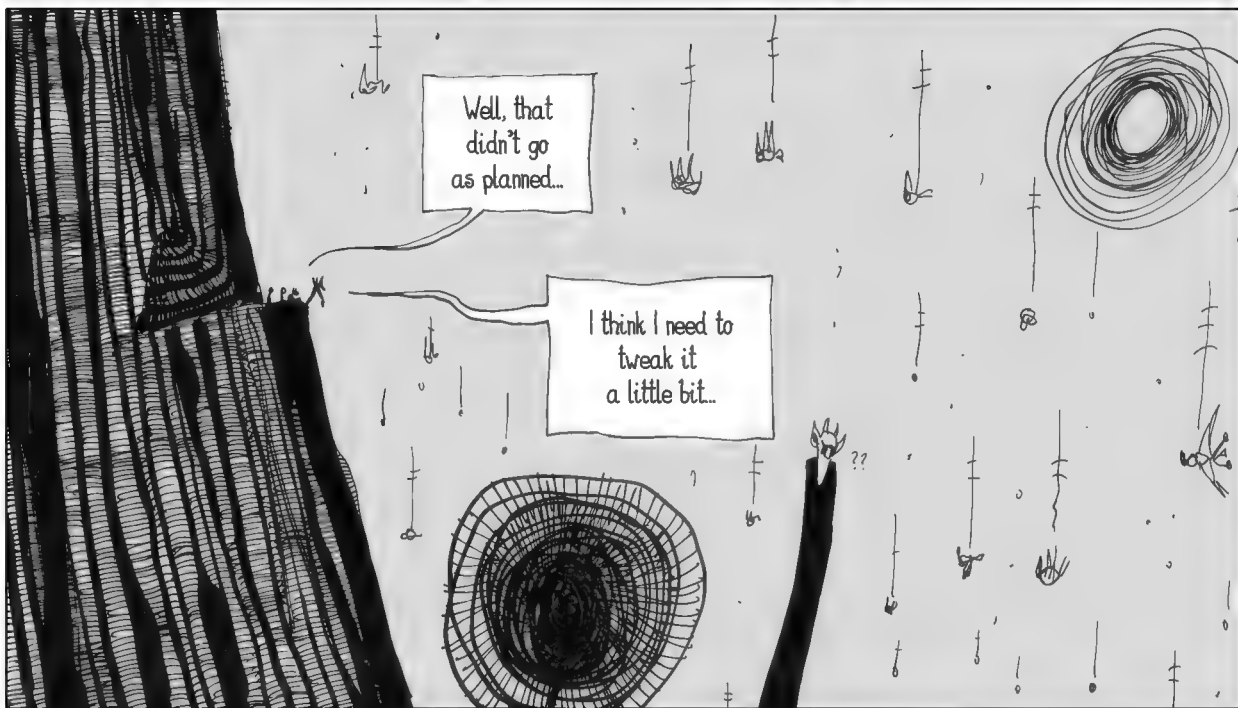
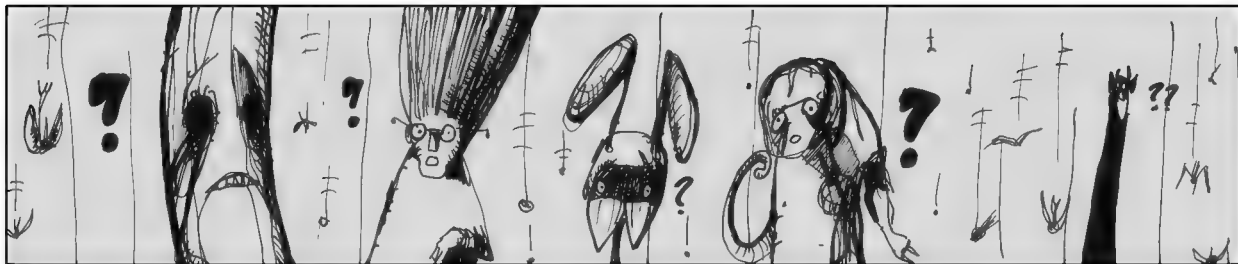


Let's go
outside...





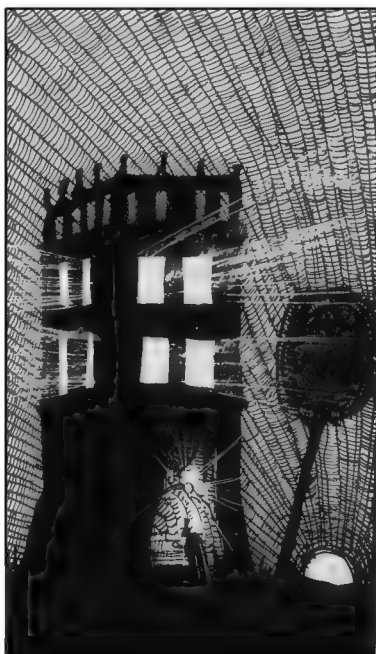
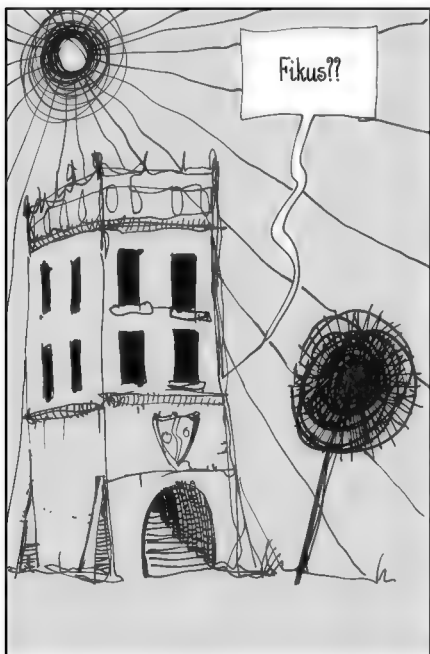
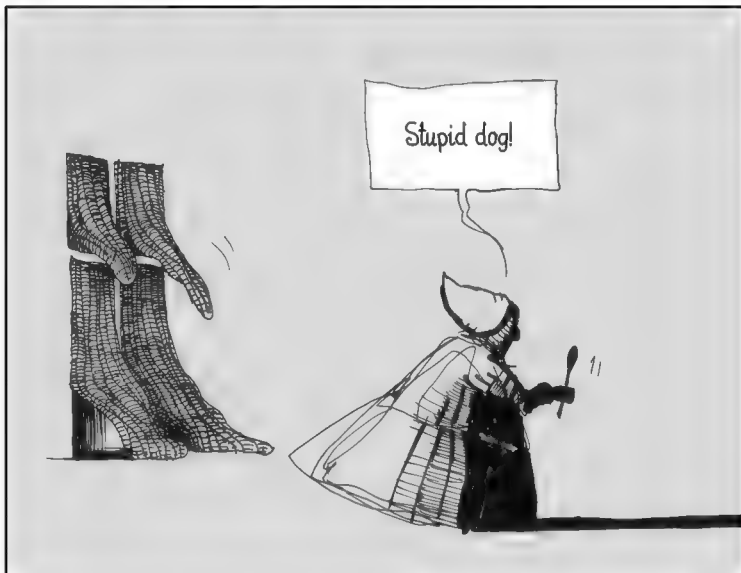


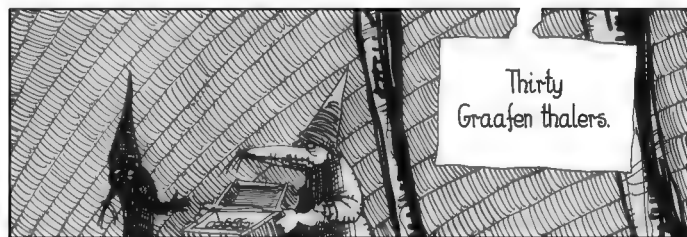
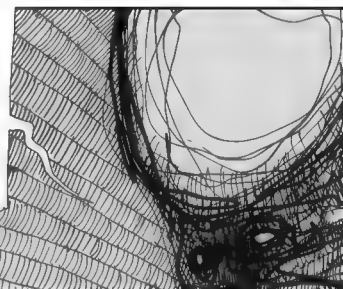
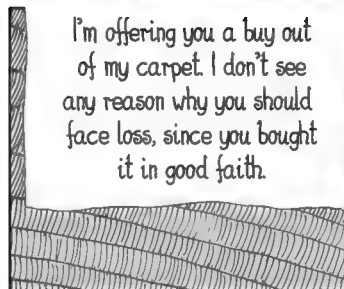
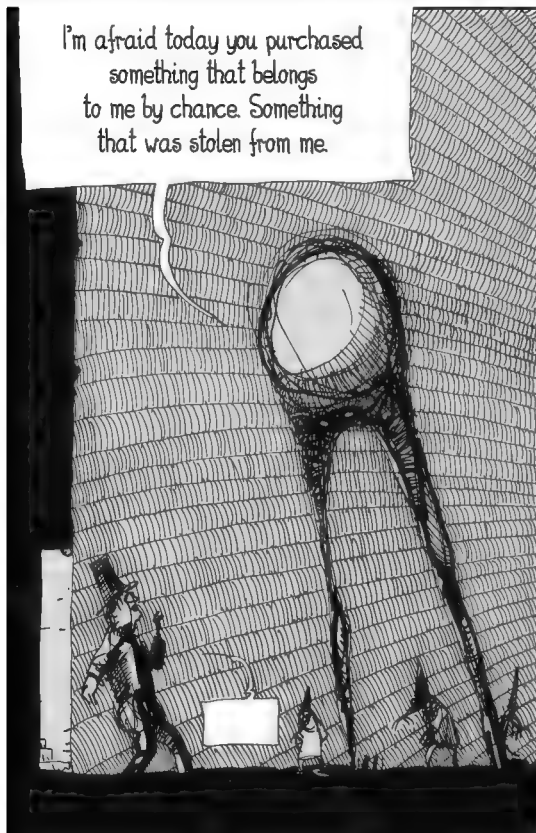
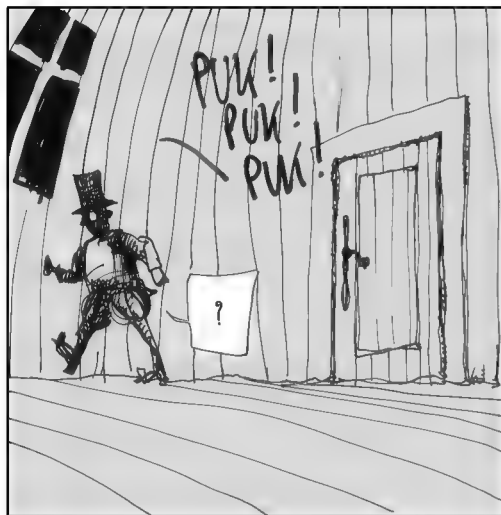




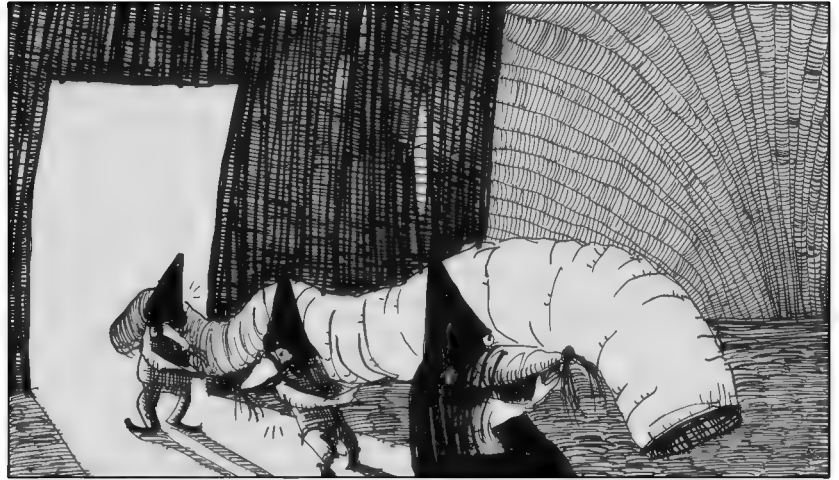


I have to go back to my stand,
that dumb acolyte just can't
tend to anything.
I'll be home before sunset.





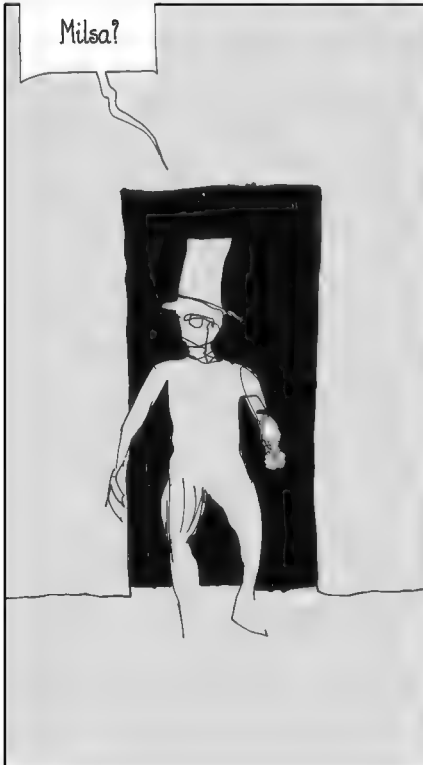
Well, of course...
We have a deal.



Good bye. I hope the carpet was behaving
nicely while that short stay at your house.



Milsa?



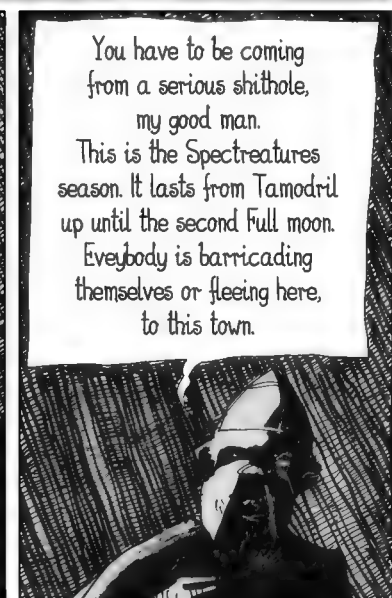
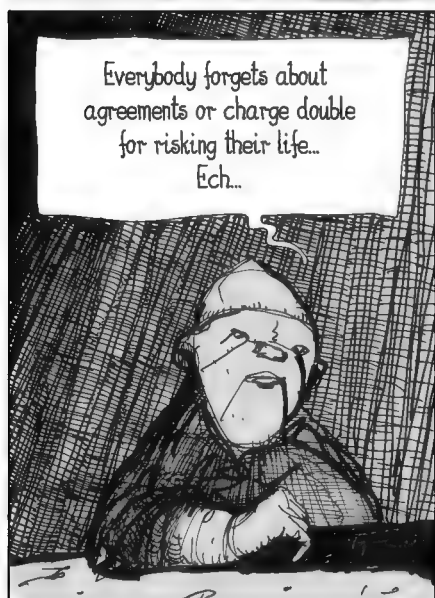
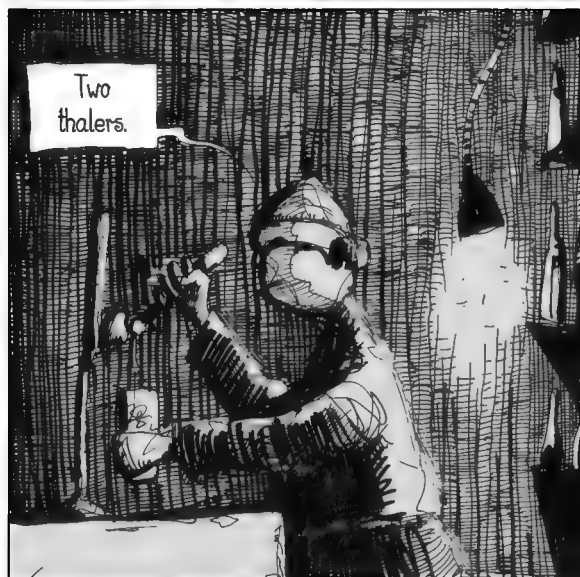
Milsa!!

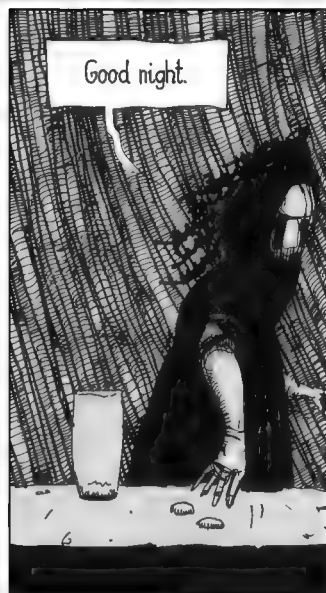
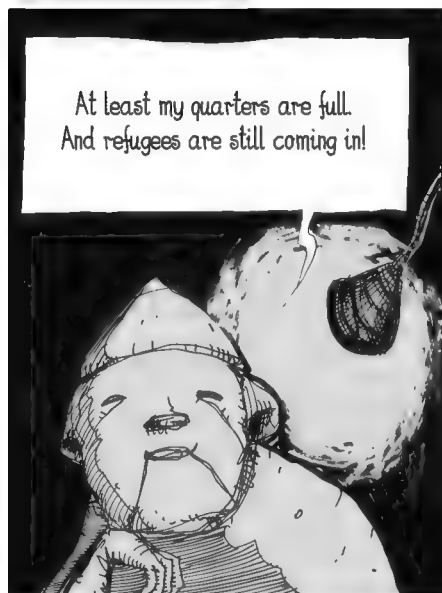
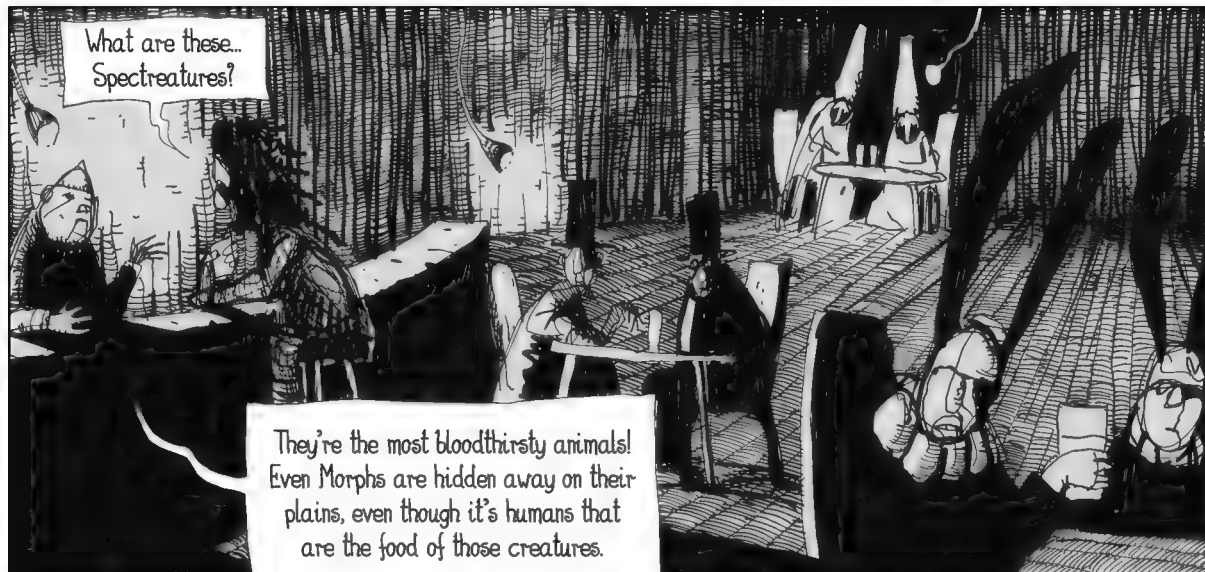


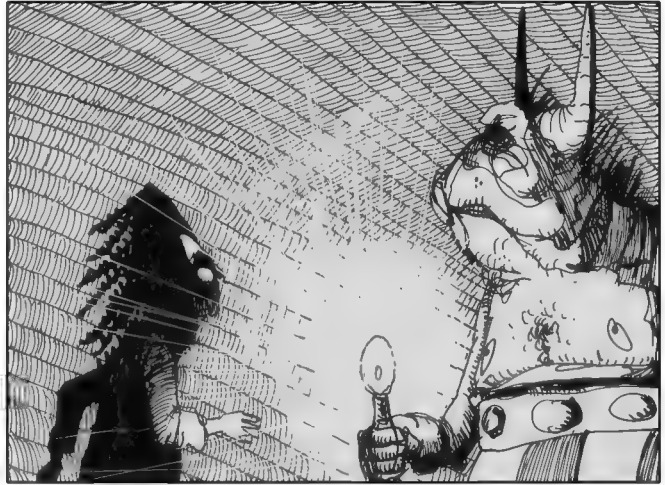
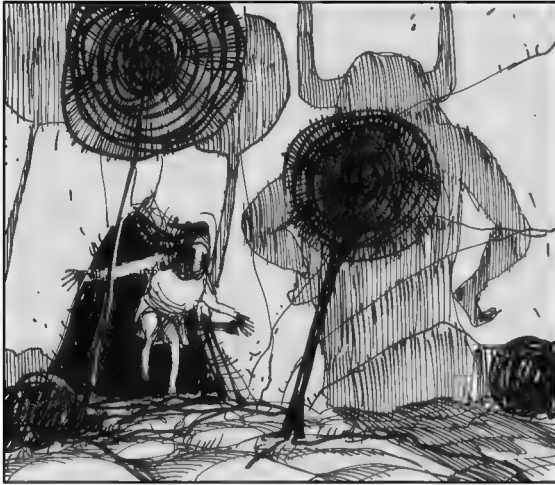
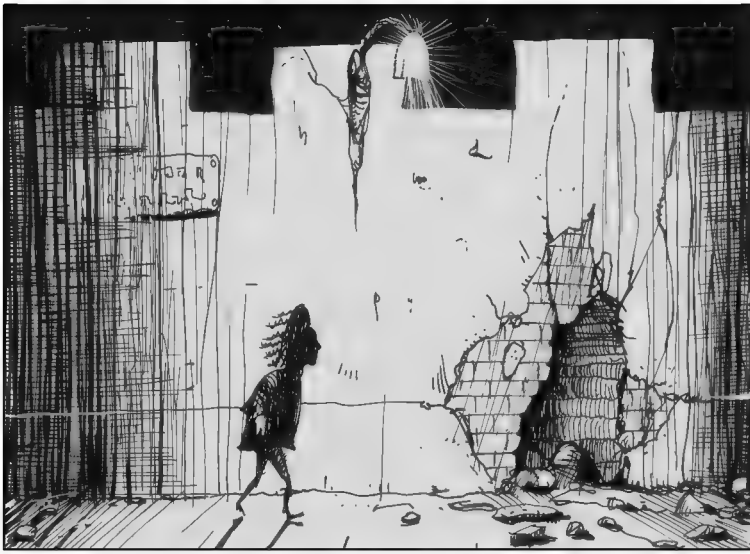
Milsa!!!



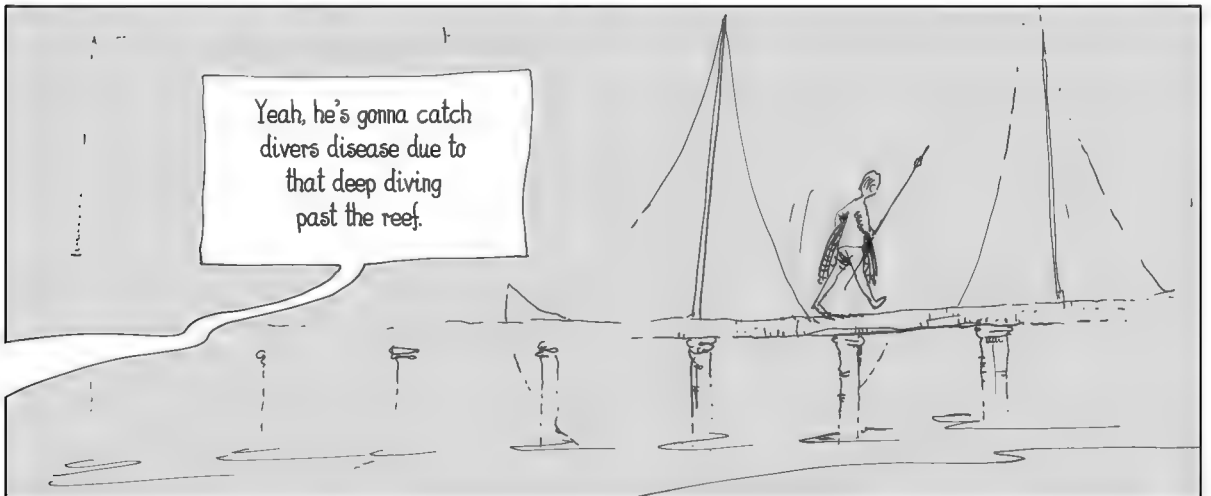
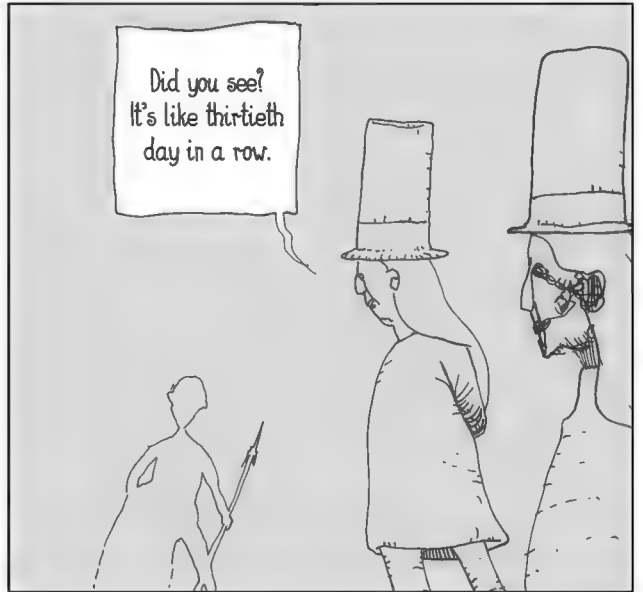
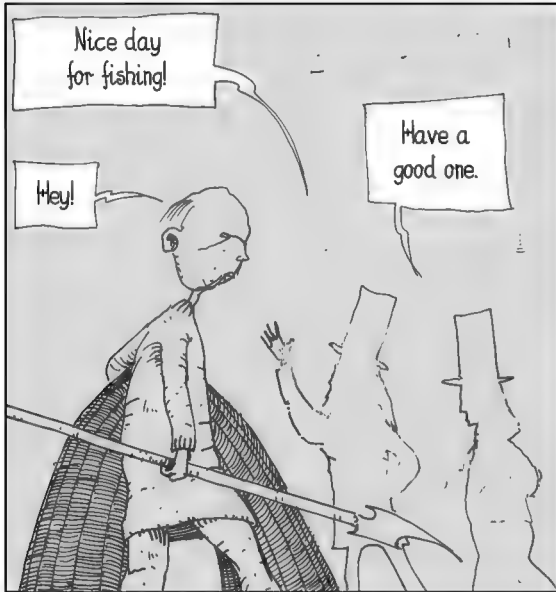


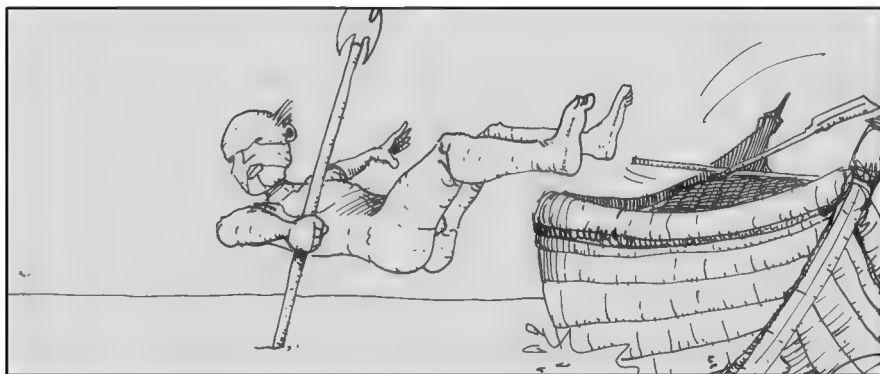
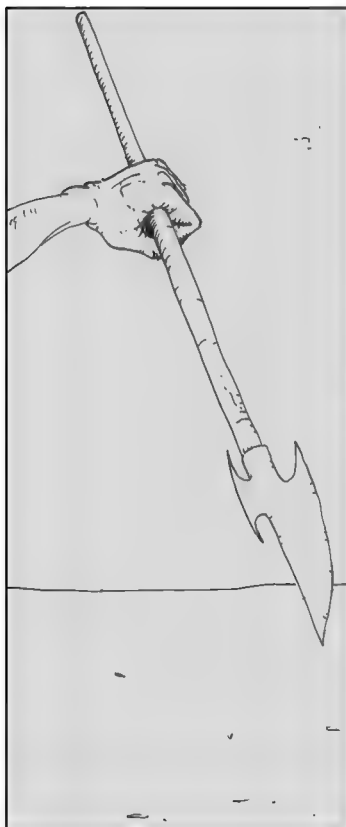
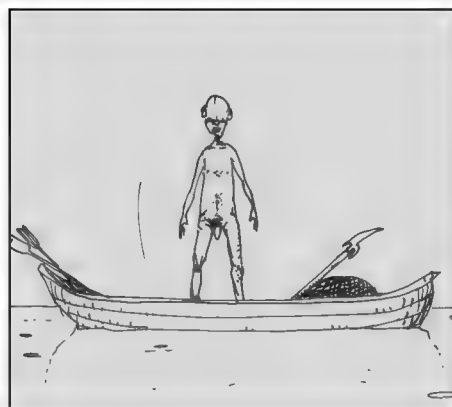
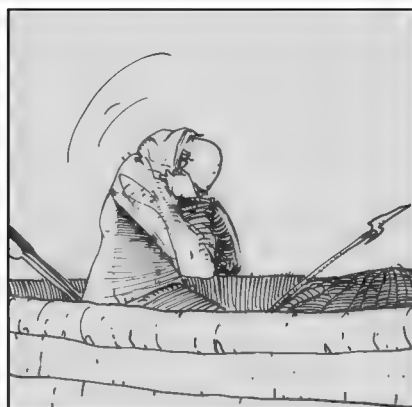
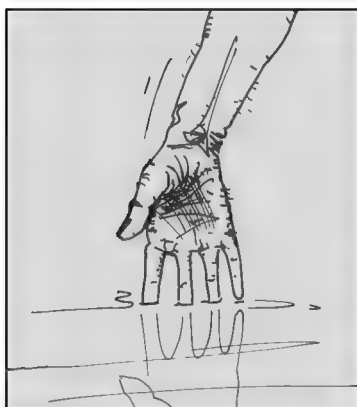
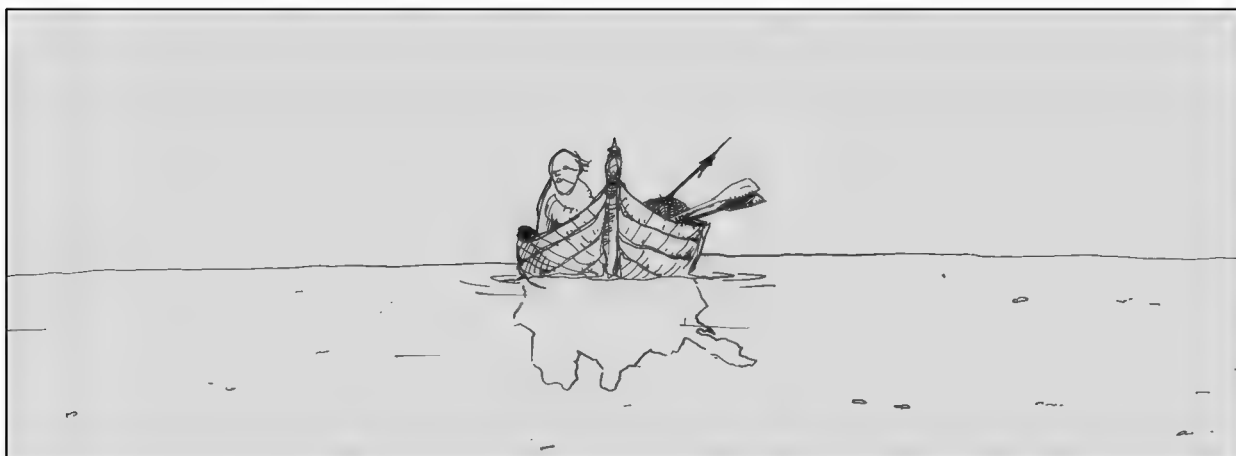


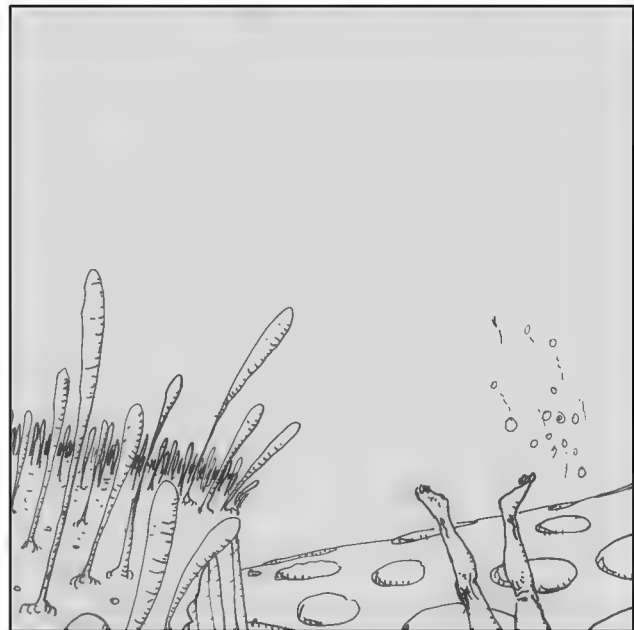
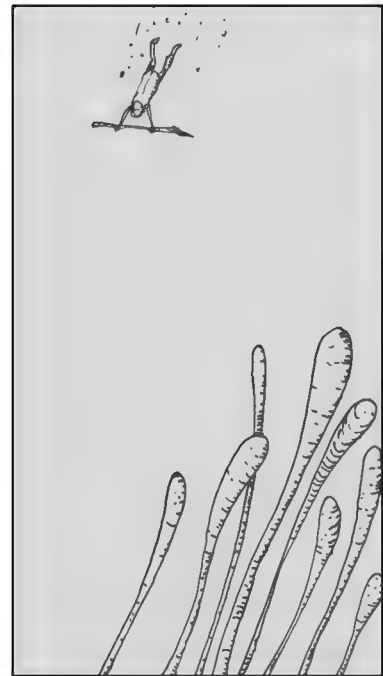
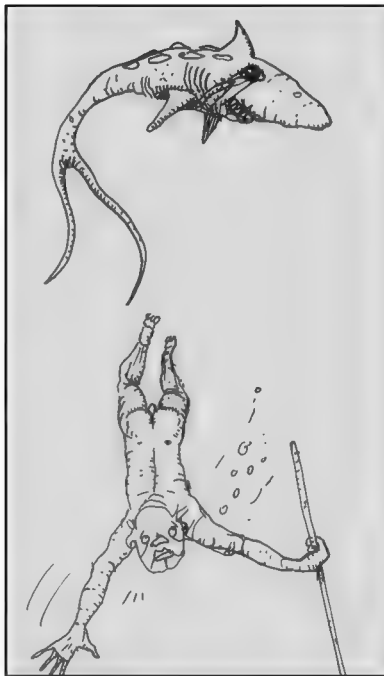


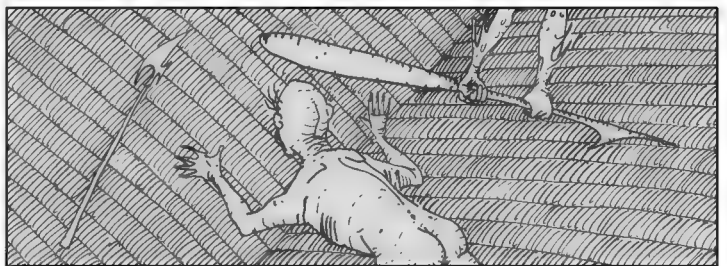
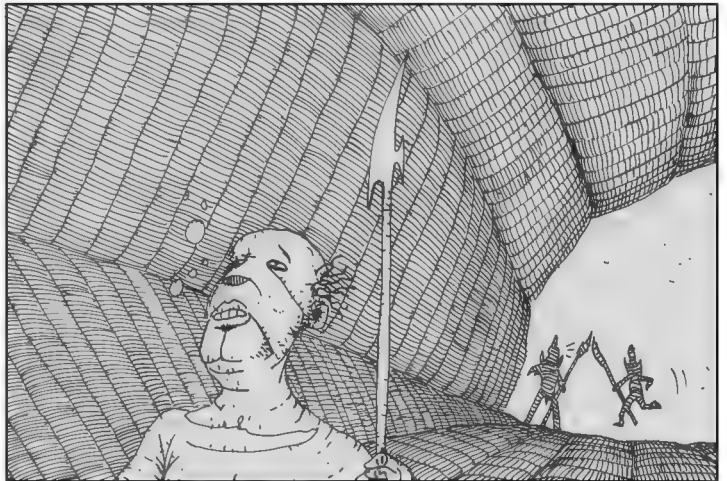
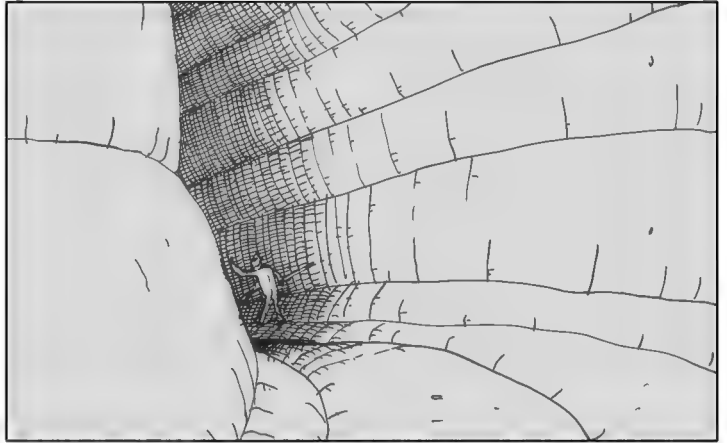
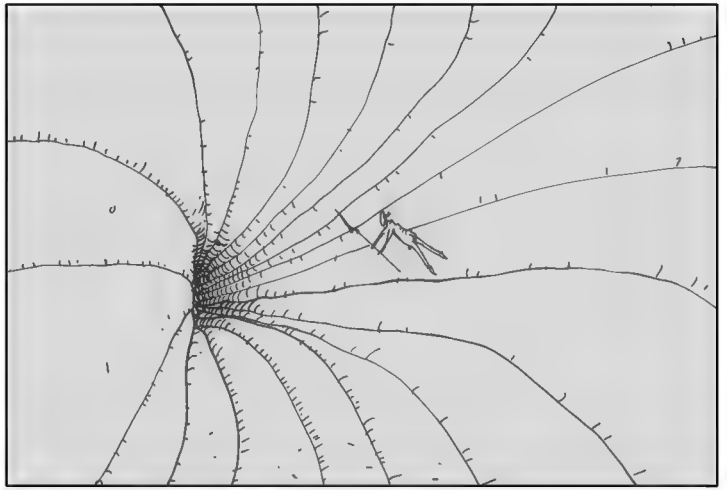
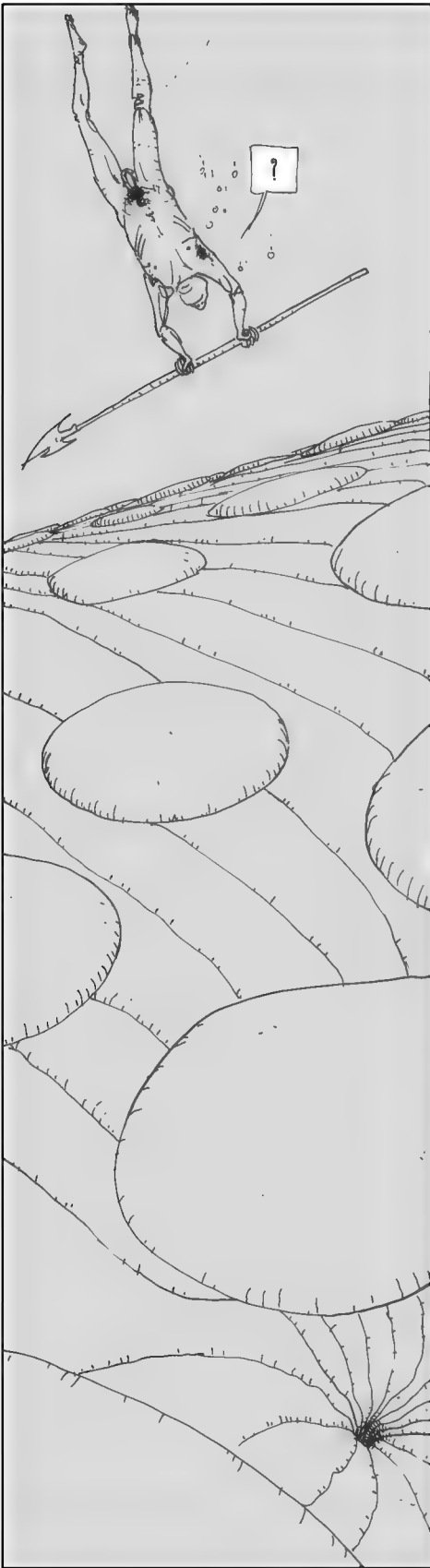


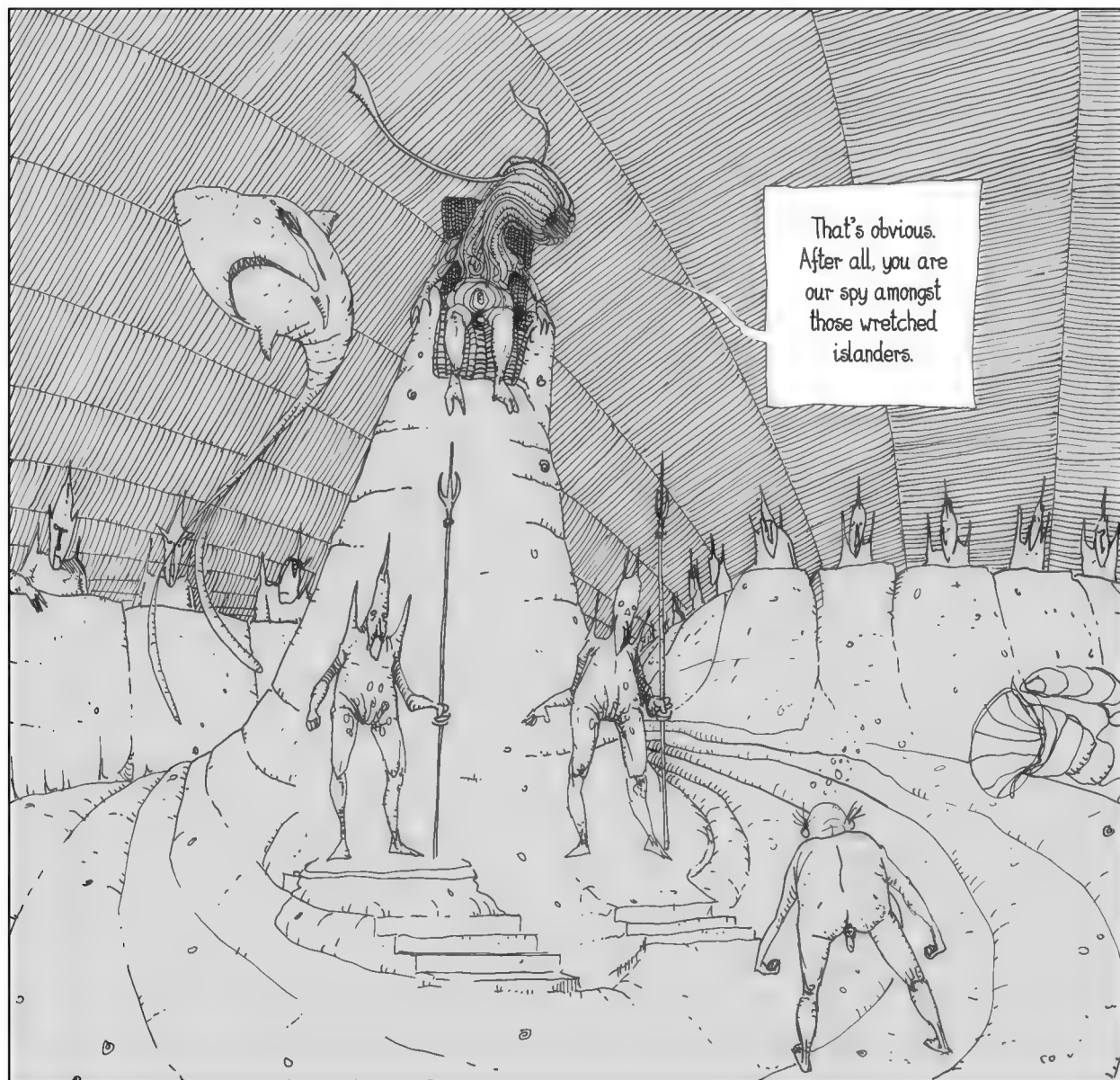
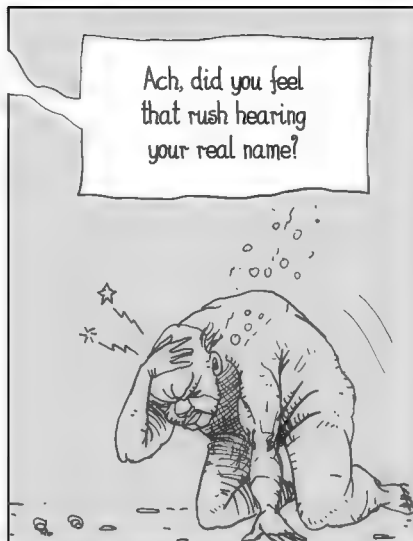






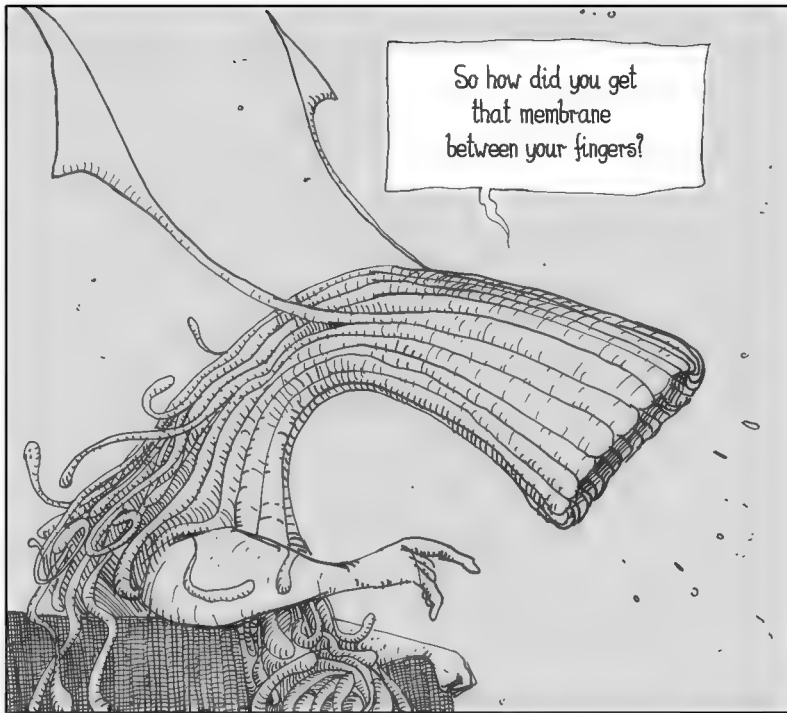








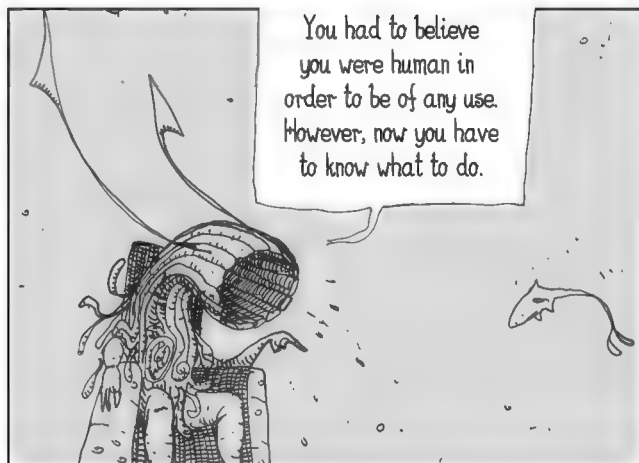
Interesting.
But I don't know nothing
about this.



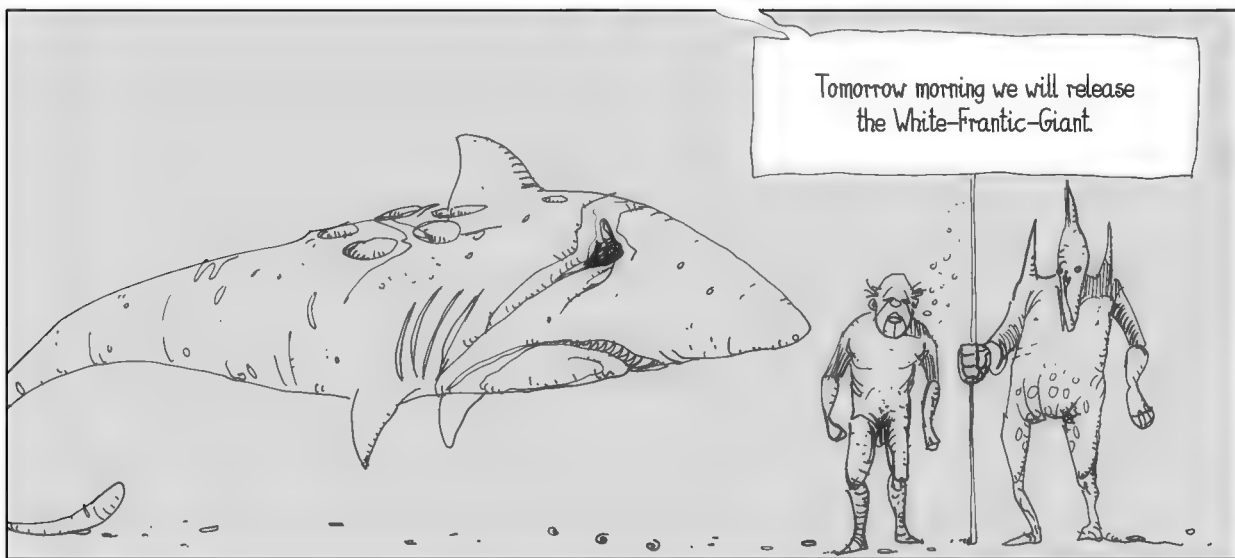
So how did you get
that membrane
between your fingers?



And how are you able to breathe
underwater, you fool?



You had to believe
you were human in
order to be of any use.
However, now you have
to know what to do.

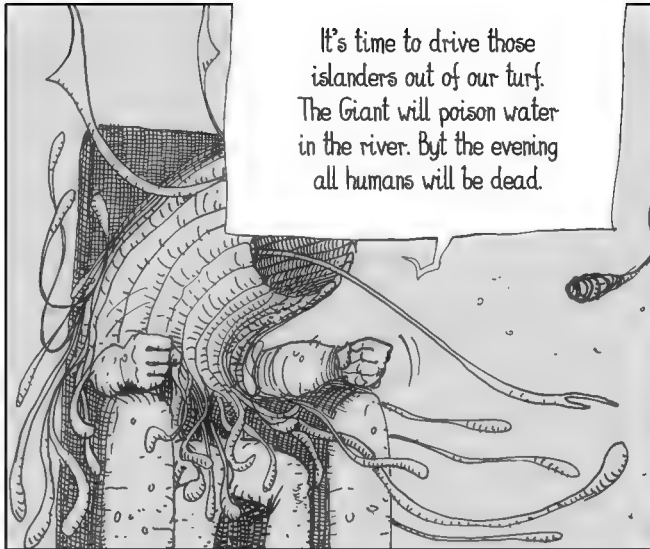


Tomorrow morning we will release
the White-Frantic-Giant.

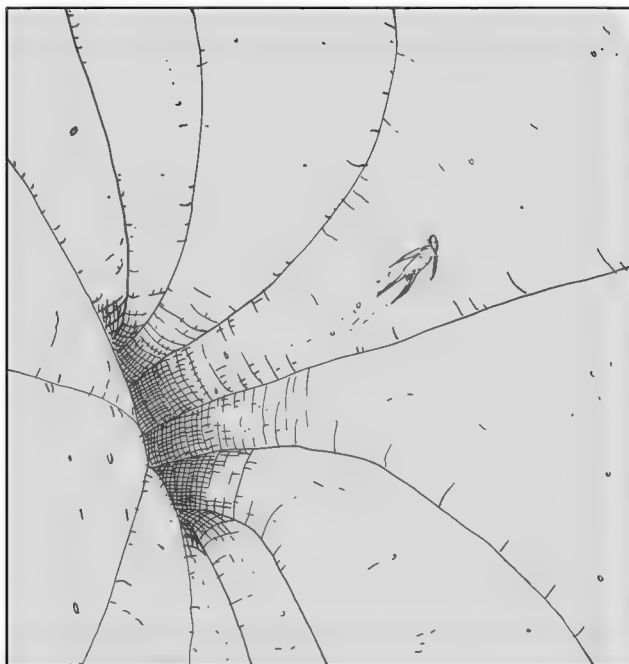
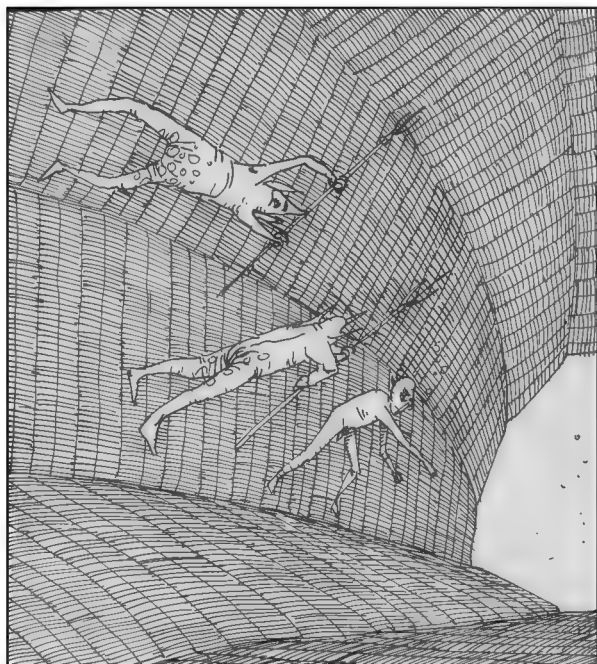
You will lead him
through the river mouth
up to the city that
you know so well by now.

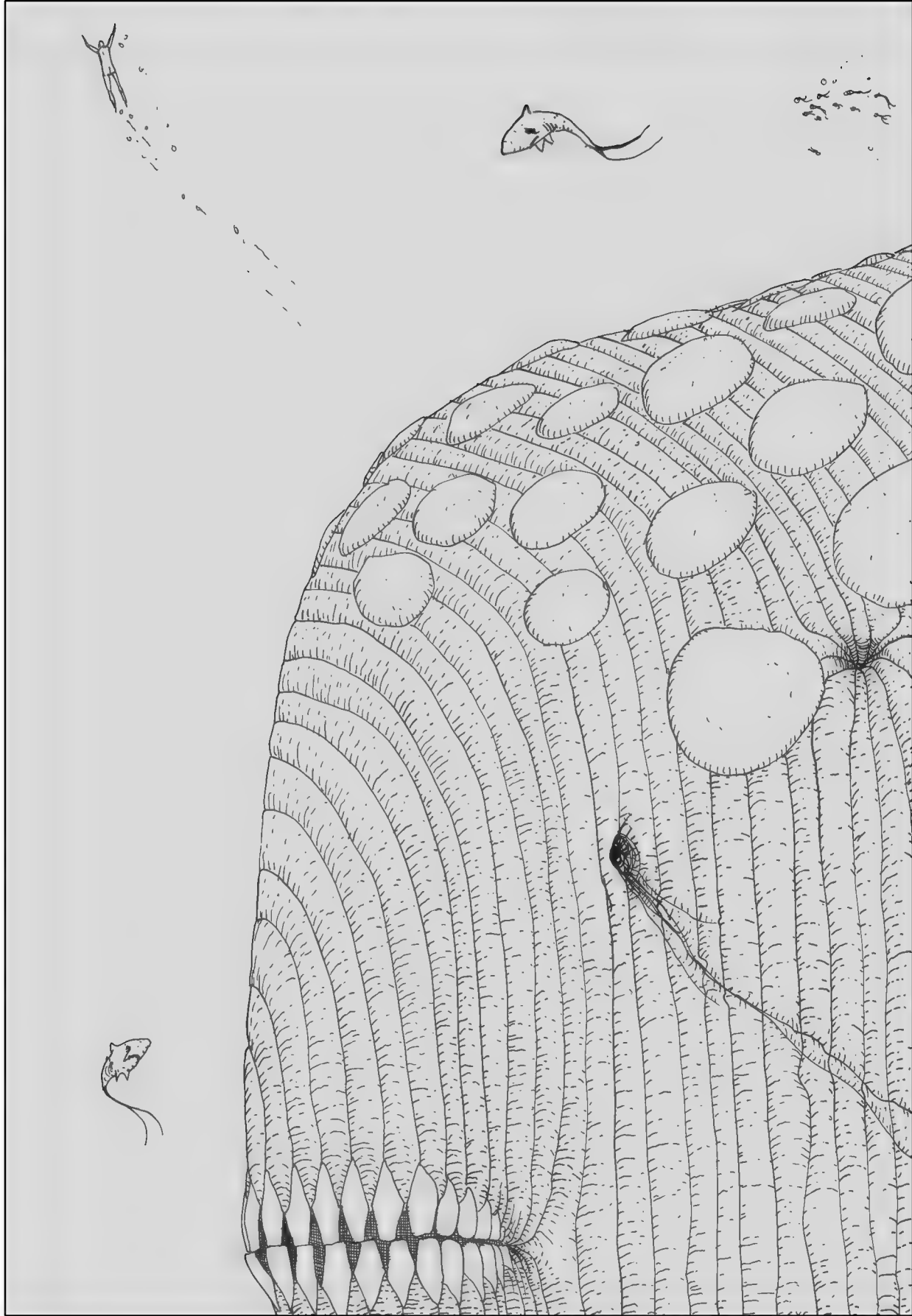


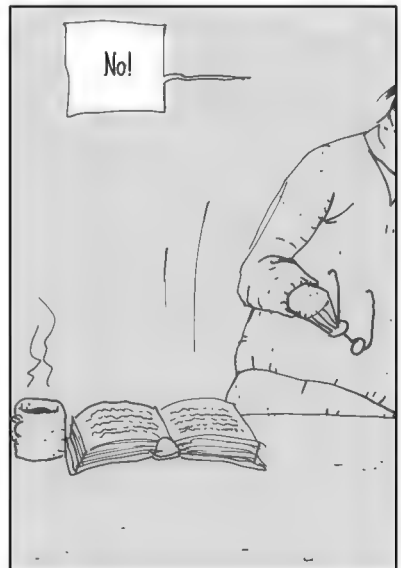
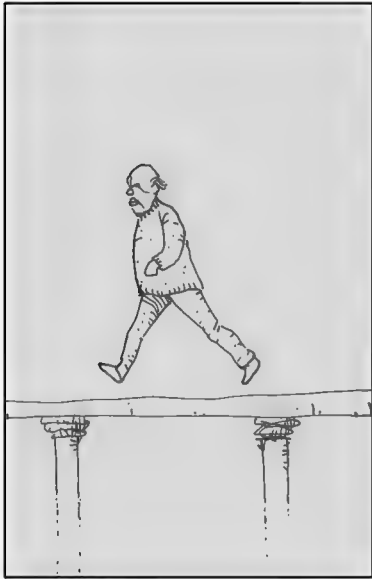
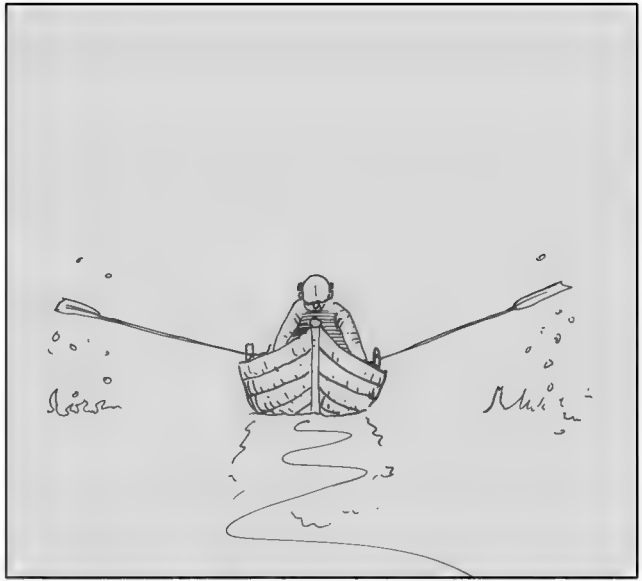
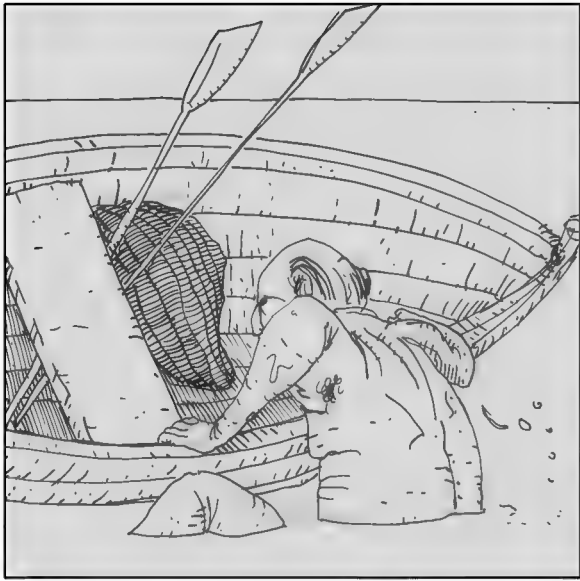
It's time to drive those
islanders out of our turf.
The Giant will poison water
in the river. Byt the evening
all humans will be dead.

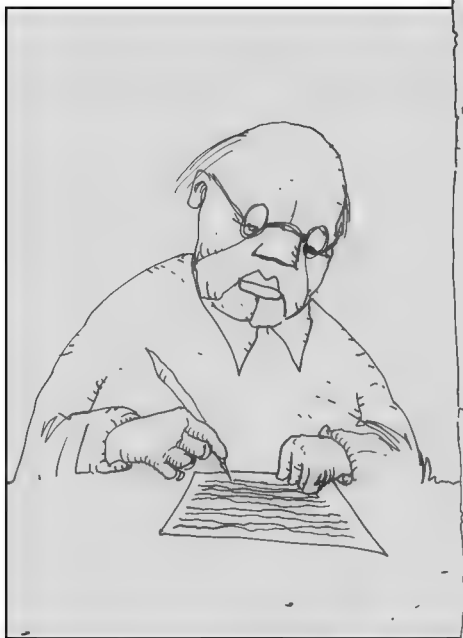


Now you are
free to go, Quassal.









I don't believe I'm a fish, or any other sea creature...

I might have fallen victim of some underwater demons
and their magic or something.

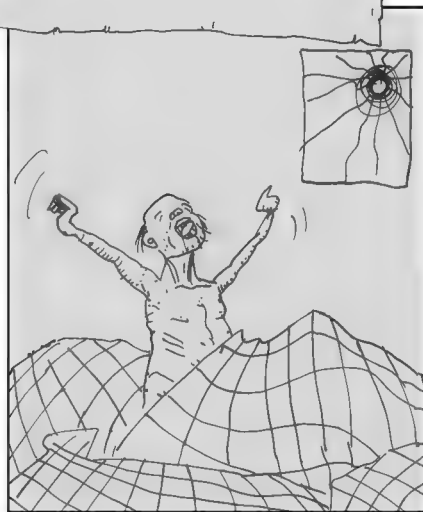
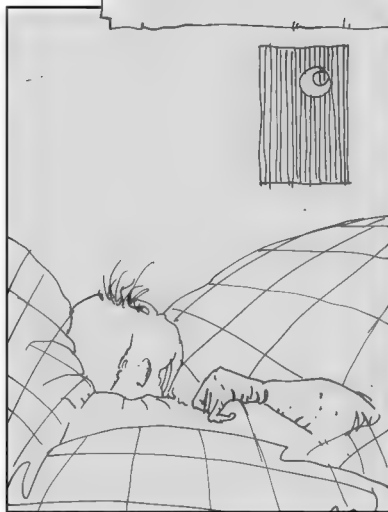
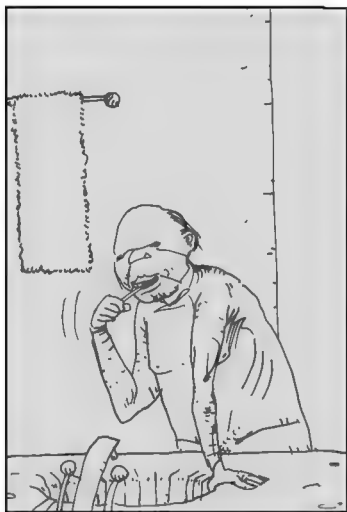
Tomorrow morning I will await that monster, but I will
not lead him up the river.

I'll send him a different message, from a former spy.

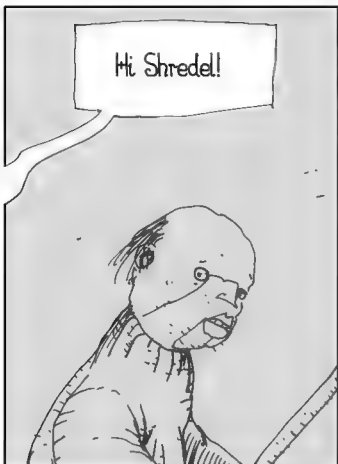
A message written with my sharpest harpoon.

If you're reading this it means I died there. Go home
or leave these islands forever, if you live here.

Shredel.



Hi Shredel!



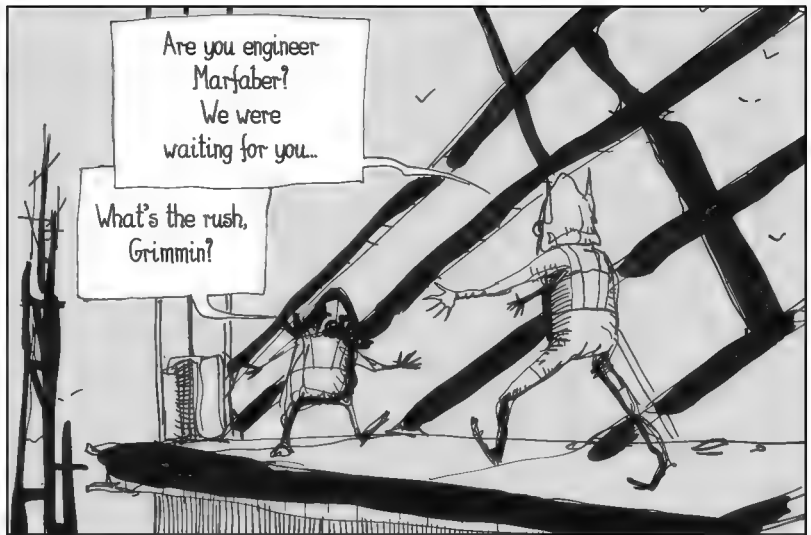
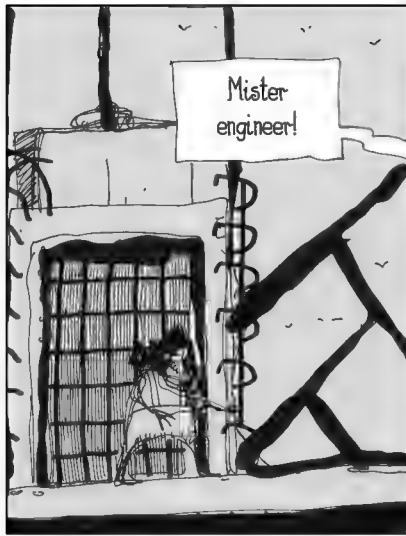
You won't believe but we had a very interesting swim yesterday.



Ach, the fog is finally clearing.







It all started a week ago, when we were building another segment on the Ninth. It was as something was passing through here on it's way down to earth's surface.



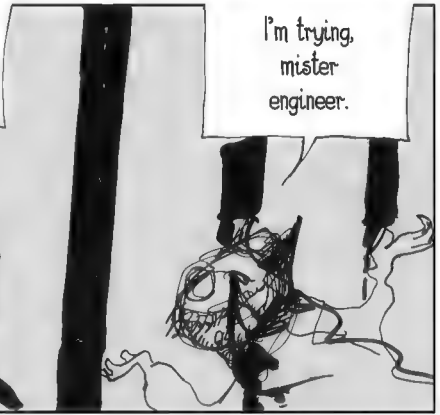
I don't understand.
Passing
our bridge?



I see you want to end up
a bit higher than common foreman.



I'm trying,
mister
engineer.



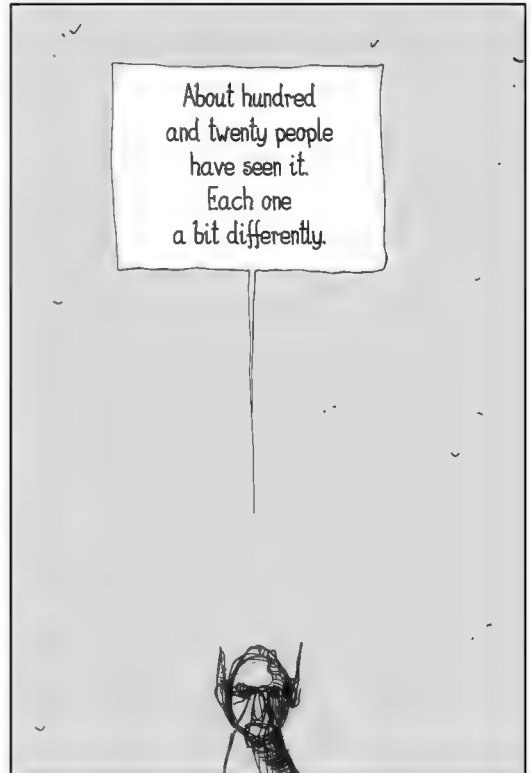
Sometimes. As I see it,
that thing has it's own
passage that intersects
with our bridge and that
causes the phenomena.

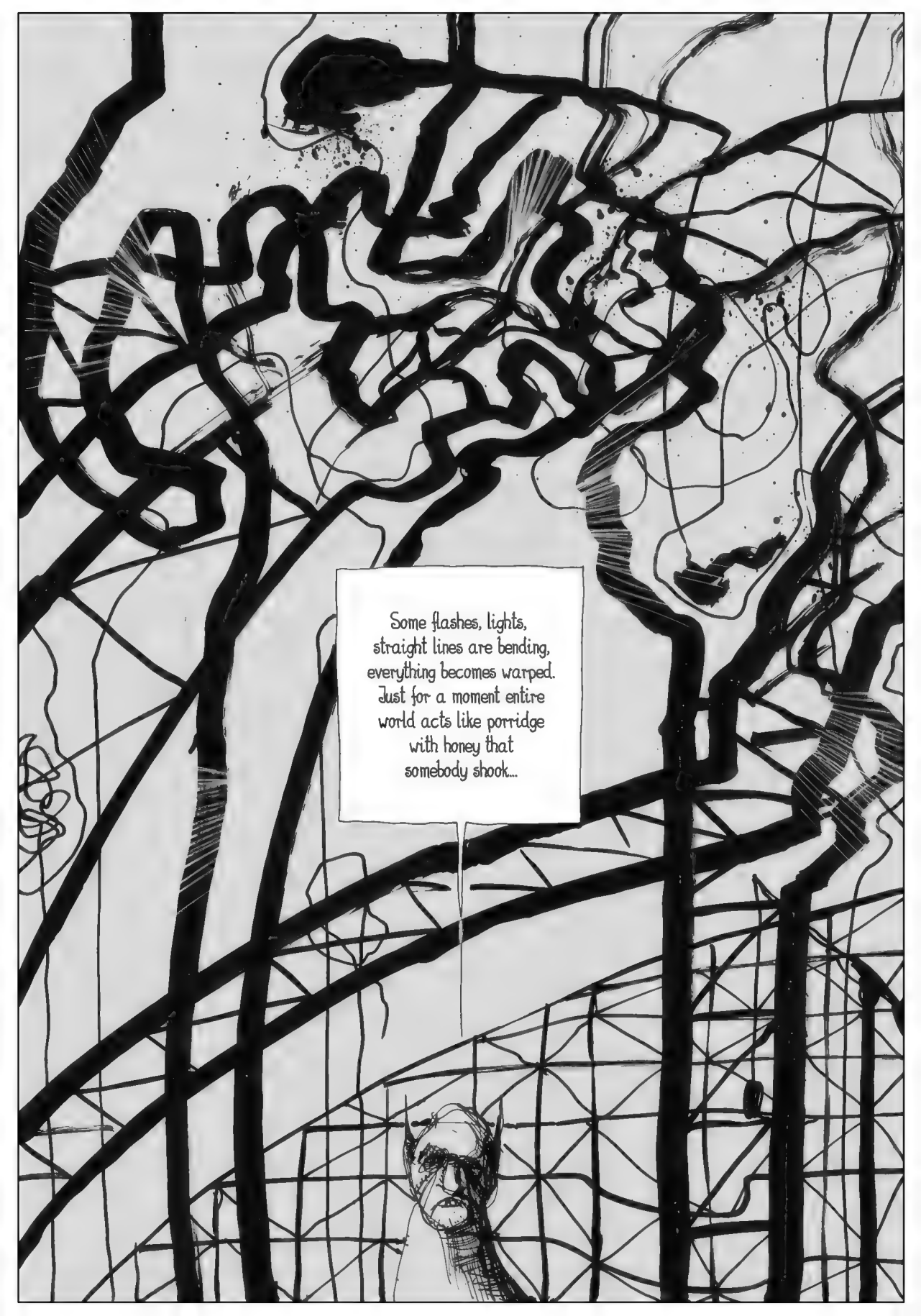


Describe
those
phenomena.

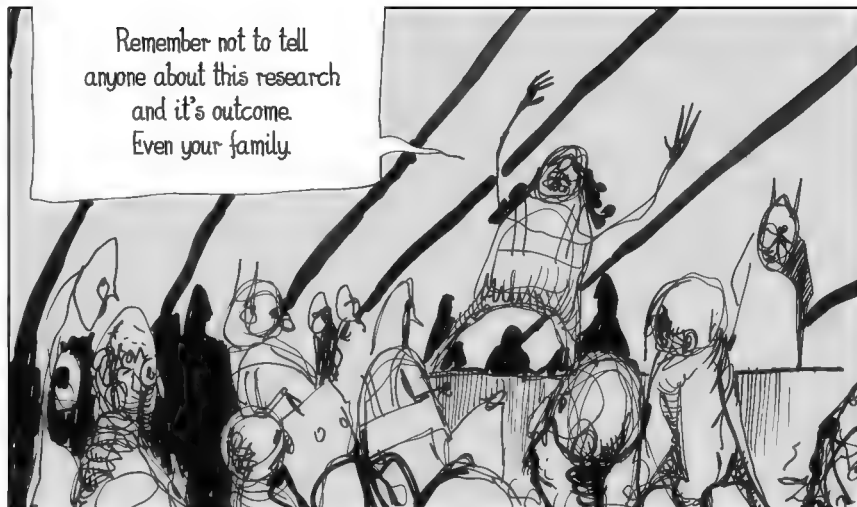
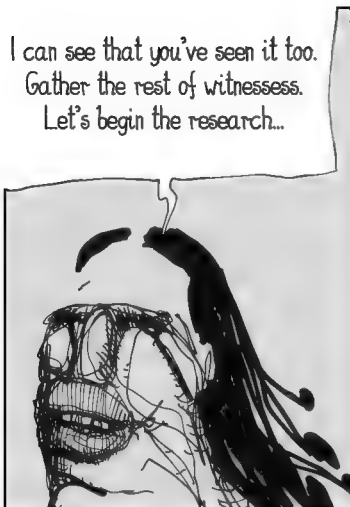


About hundred
and twenty people
have seen it.
Each one
a bit differently.





Some flashes, lights,
straight lines are bending,
everything becomes warped.
Just for a moment entire
world acts like porridge
with honey that
somebody shook...

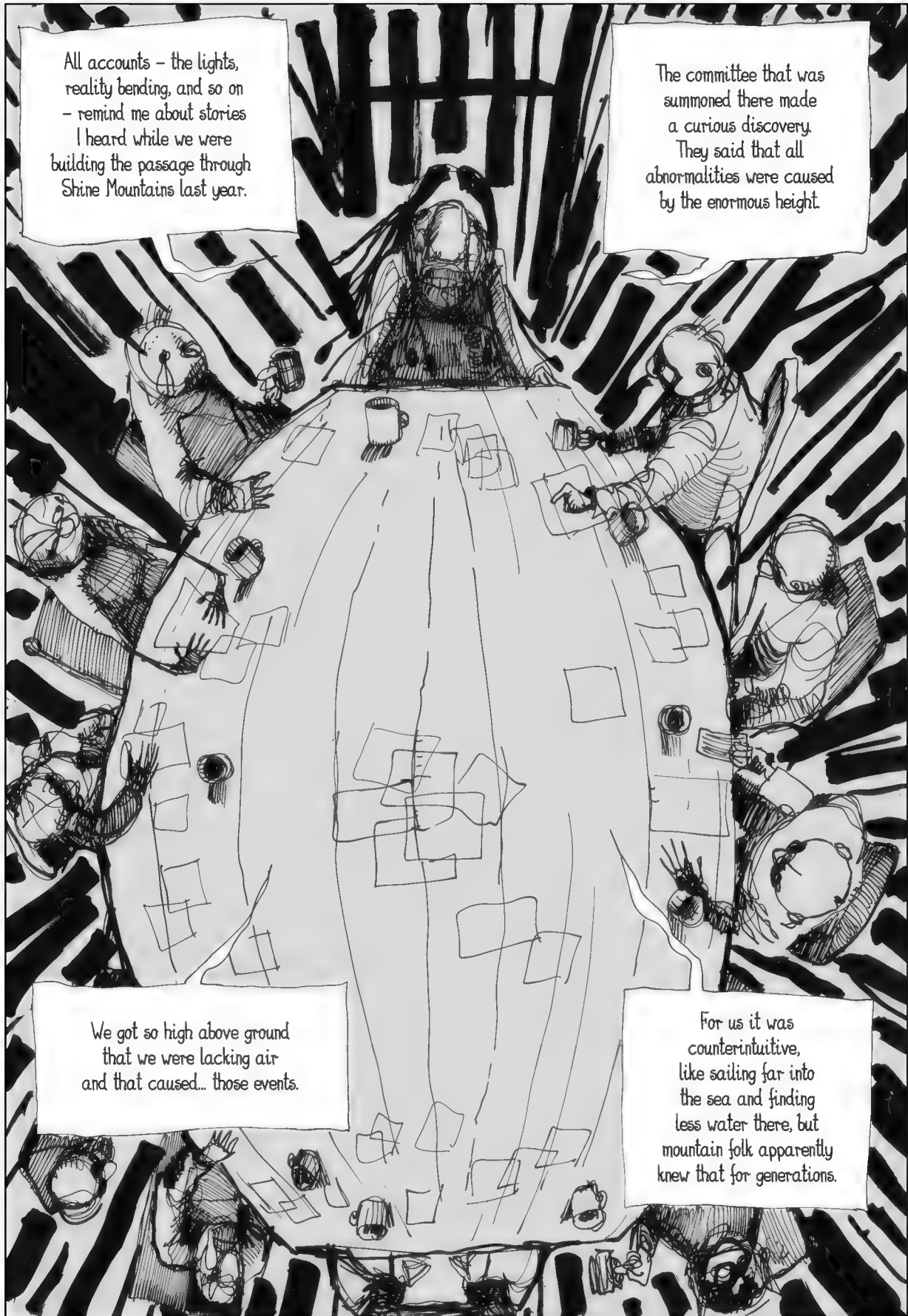


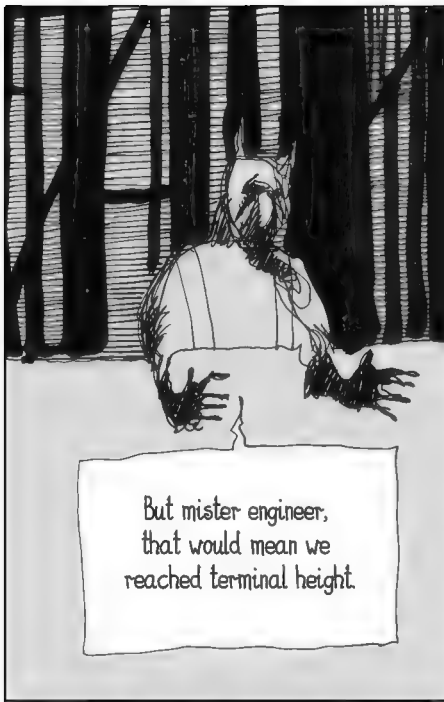
All accounts – the lights,
reality bending, and so on
– remind me about stories
I heard while we were
building the passage through
Shine Mountains last year.

The committee that was
summoned there made
a curious discovery.
They said that all
abnormalities were caused
by the enormous height.

We got so high above ground
that we were lacking air
and that caused... those events.

For us it was
counterintuitive,
like sailing far into
the sea and finding
less water there, but
mountain folk apparently
knew that for generations.





But mister engineer,
that would mean we
reached terminal height.

Maybe it's the folk
from heaven sabotaging
construction of our
bridge.
Maybe they're afraid
of a solid connection
between our lands
and yet unconquered
celestial realm?



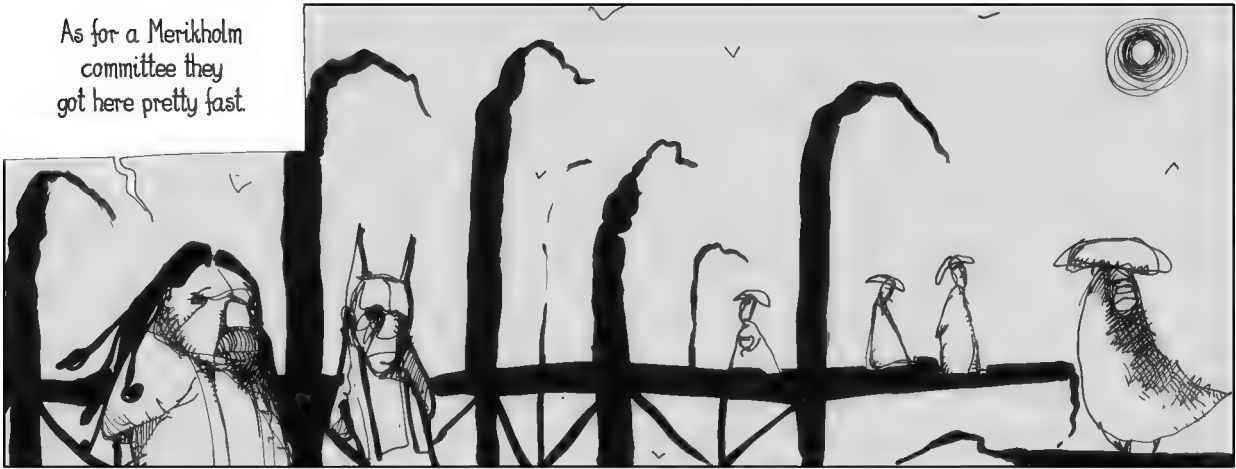
This might be
an attack!!

We have to
write to the
verification
committee.

Yes!
We need to summon
the committee!

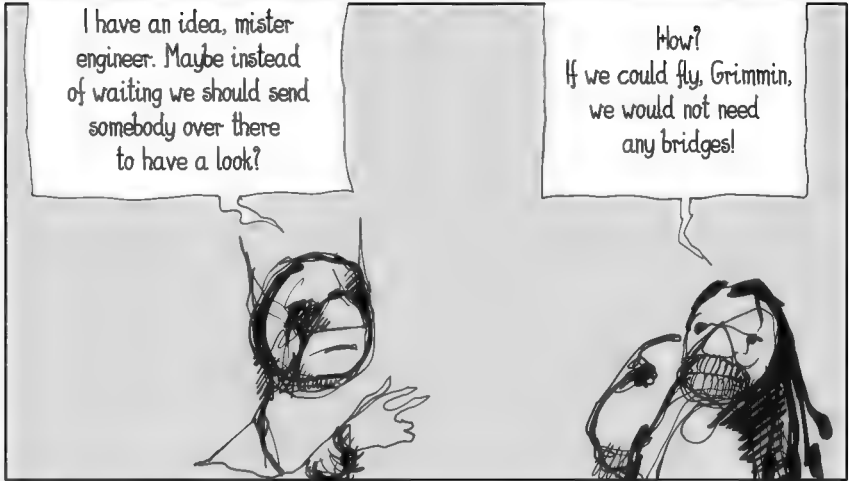


As for a Merikholm
committee they
got here pretty fast.



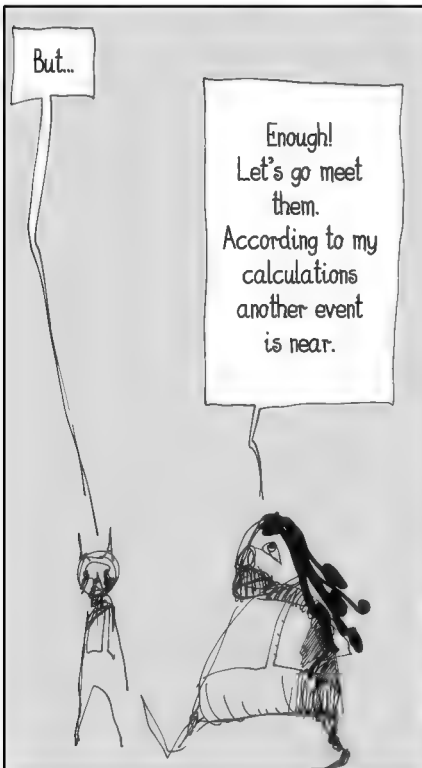
I have an idea, mister
engineer. Maybe instead
of waiting we should send
somebody over there
to have a look?

How?
If we could fly, Grimmin,
we would not need
any bridges!

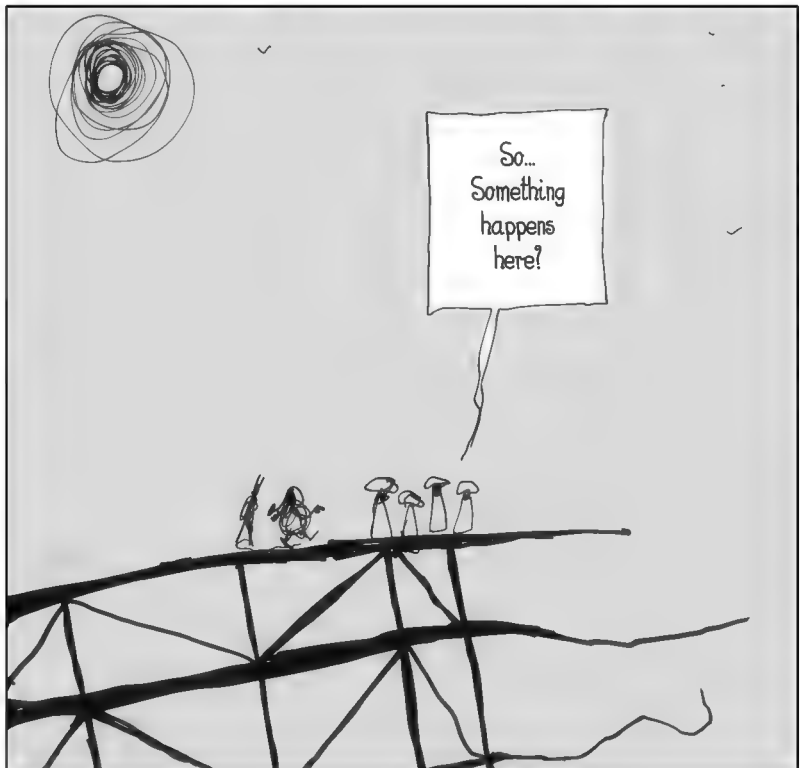


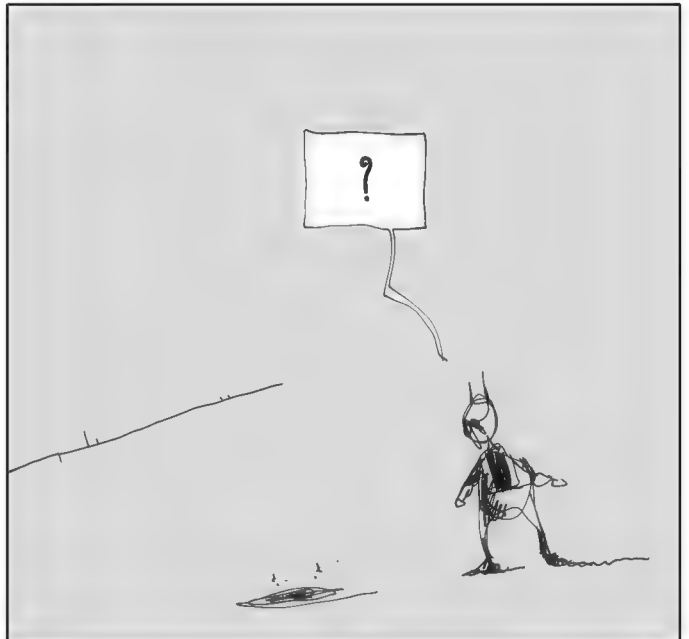
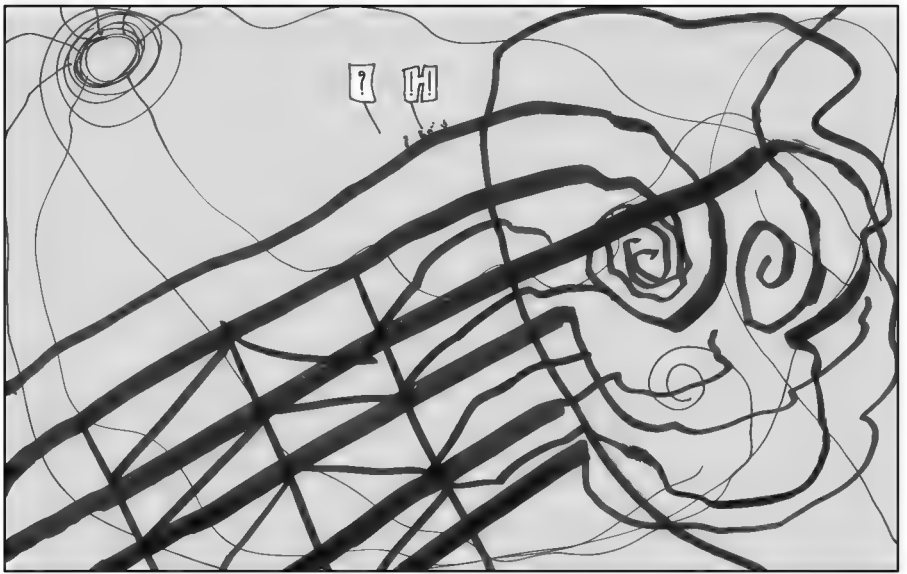
But...

Enough!
Let's go meet
them.
According to my
calculations
another event
is near.



So...
Something
happens
here?

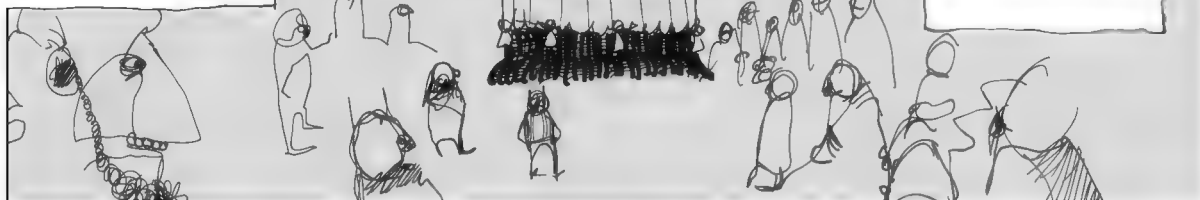




The disappearance, or rather kidnapping of engineer Mar-faber ultimately proves that we're not dealing with delusions.

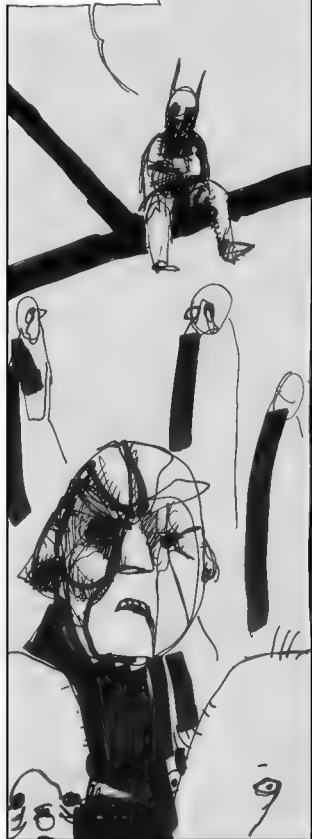
We're faced with hostile actions of celestial folk trying to prevent us from building that bridge!

This is why we need to double our effort in building this structure, which they evidently fear, as they showed.



The final connection between earth and sky via a bridge!

I'm telling you guys, this is going to be a mess.



What was that, boss?



I don't know. Engineer disappeared as if he never existed...

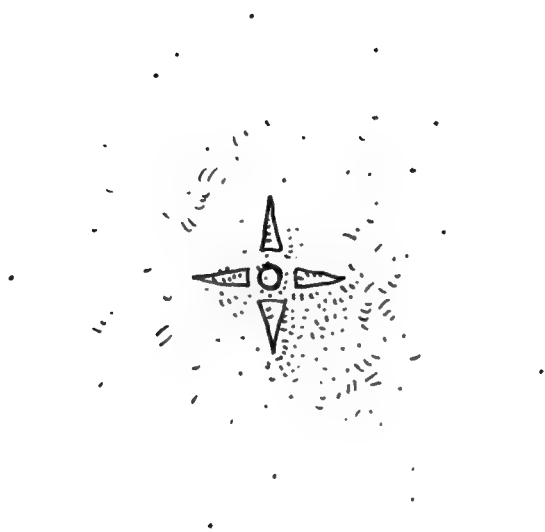
They could have at least listen to me... I urge you guys to build those wings I designed for you.

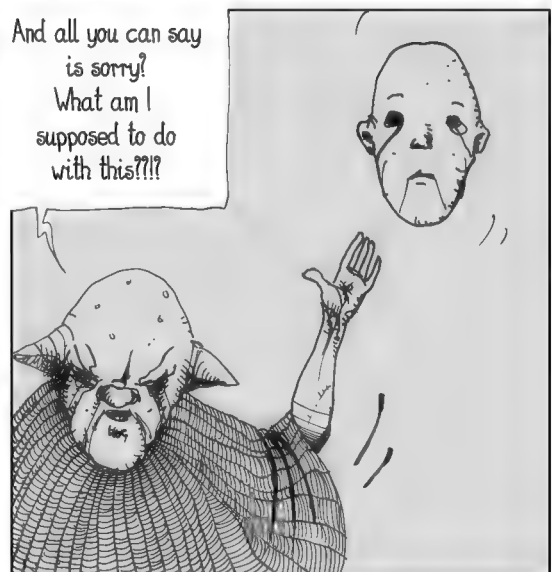
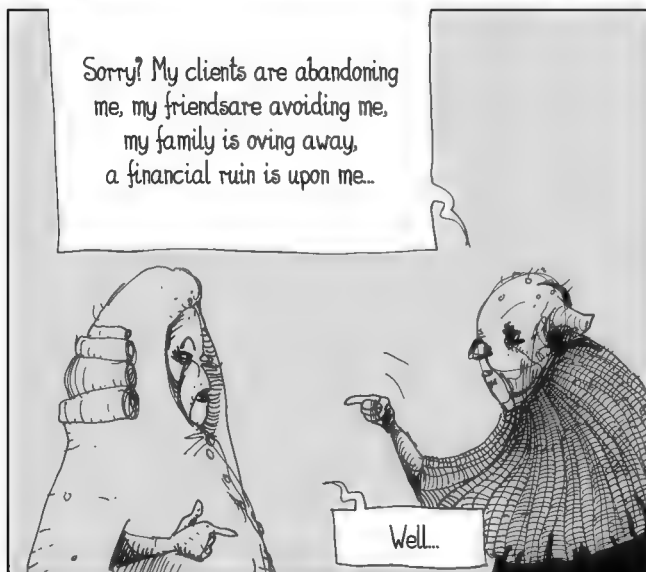
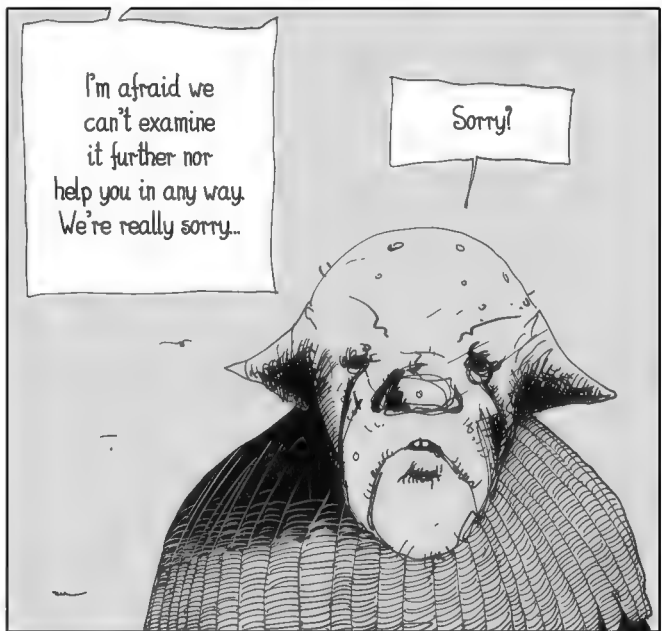
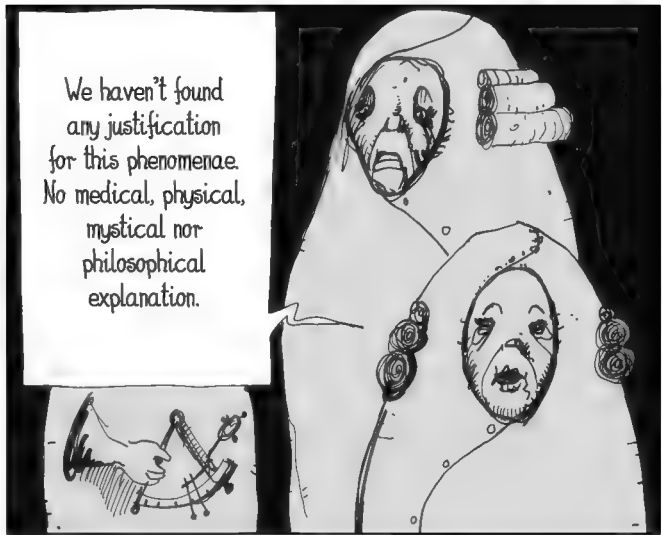


Because when push comes to shove I'd rather fly away...

... but a bit slower than this bottle.



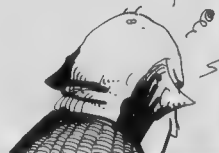




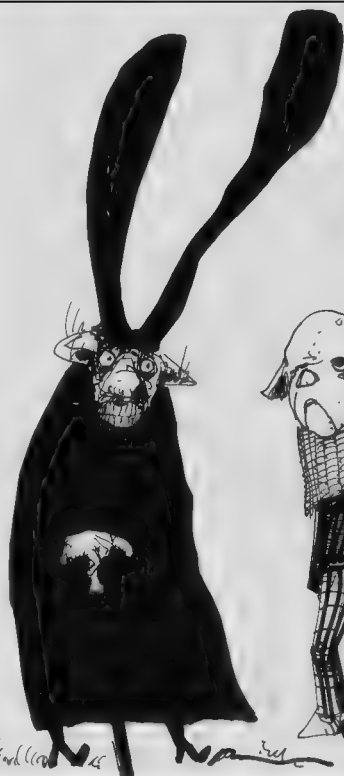
Well, maybe you should try at the temple.
Maybe the cause is transcendent towards
us. That would explain our problems.



We really wish you'd
be able to solve this
problem, mister Johann.



So you understand my situation,
reverend... Maybe I'm not a saint,
but I never offended gods
in any way to deserve
such curse...



I know you and I know it's true.
Pray to merciful Don'Gryaz and
mighty Volgrum and they will
open your eyes and you will see.



I don't understand,
reverend.



Maybe it's not
a curse, Johann.



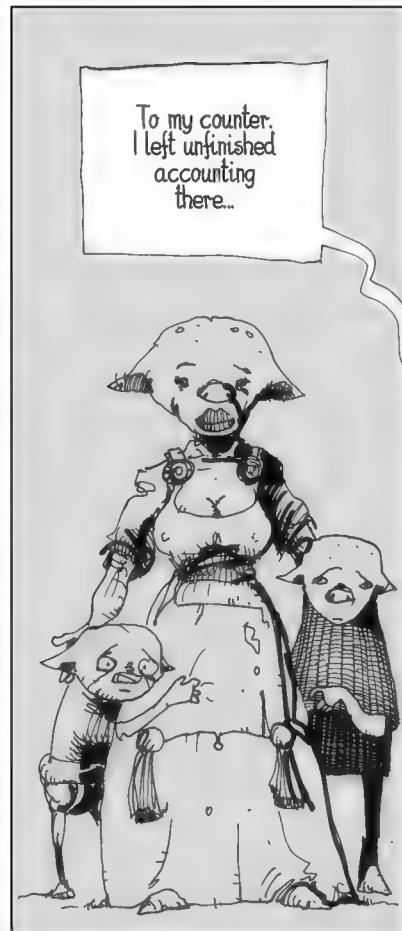
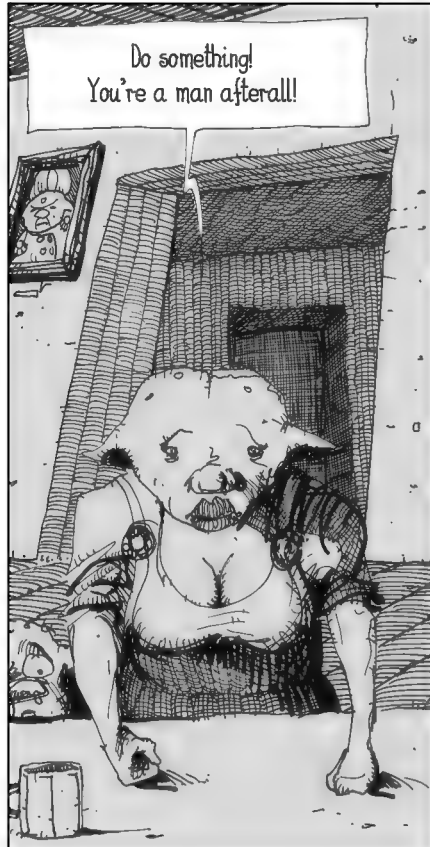
Maybe you were chosen
and this head is
a sign? Maybe it's
an announcement of
bigger things to come?

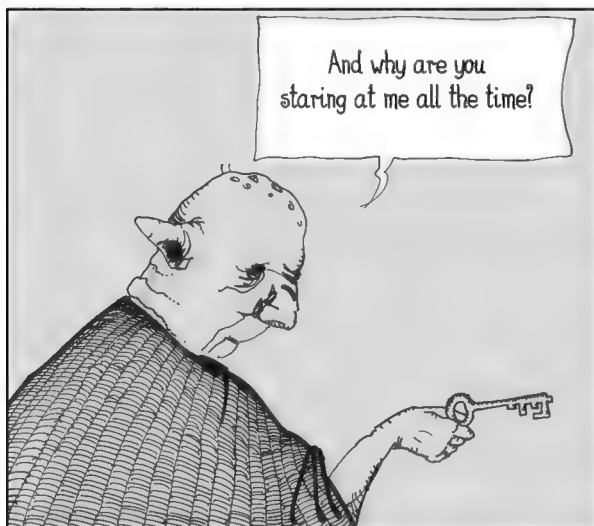
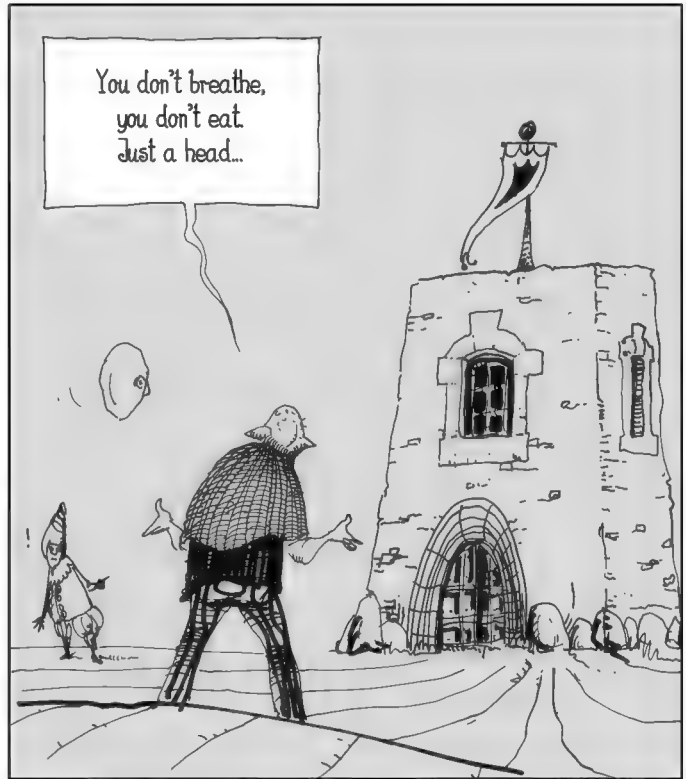
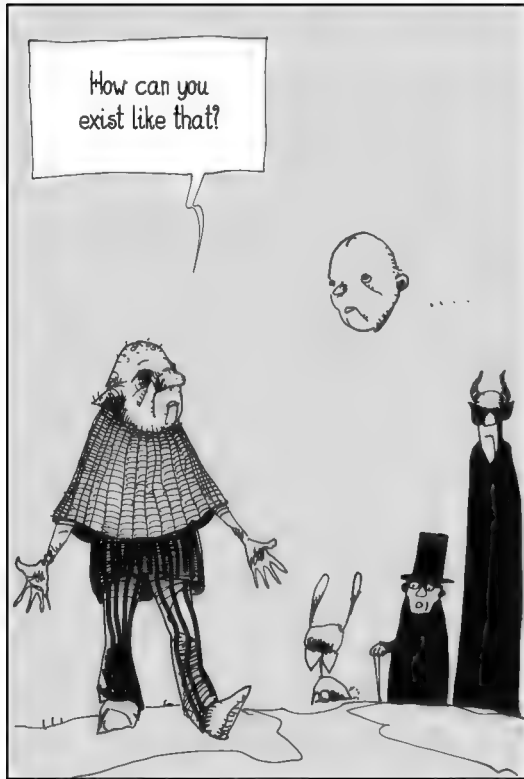
In that case it's a silent
announcement...

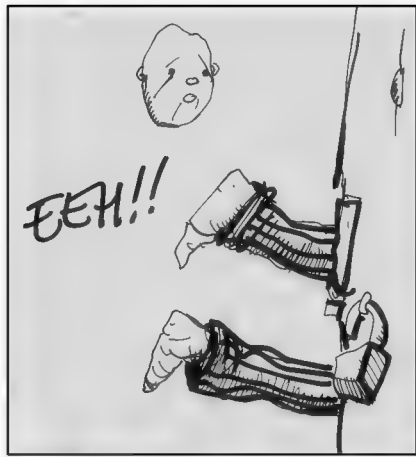


But still...
Pray and
have faith.





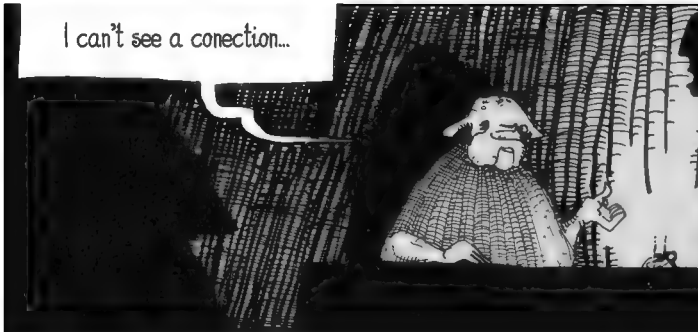




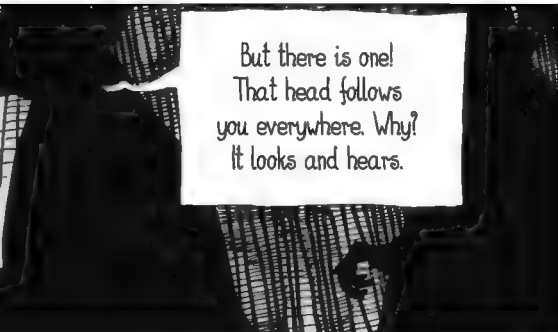
Please excuse our abrupt behavior, but the situation demands it, mister Johann.



We're in Caesar's duty. We were informed about your peculiar friend.



I can't see a conection...



But there is one! That head follows you everywhere. Why? It looks and hears.

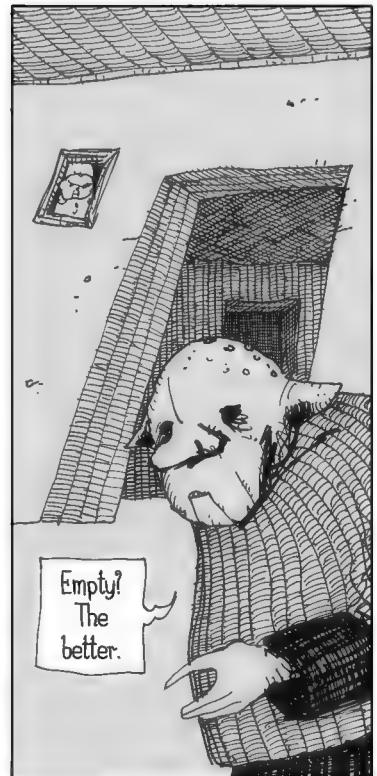
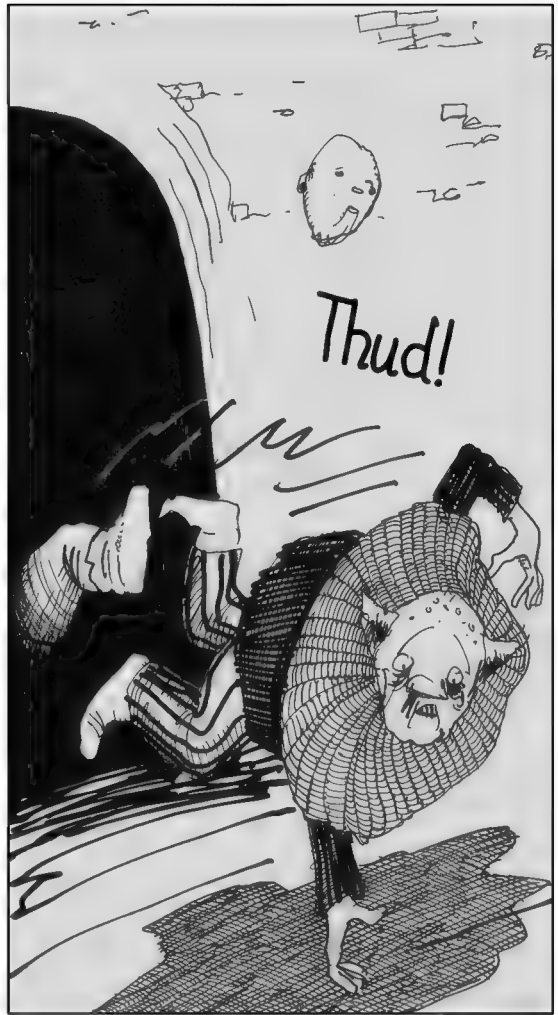


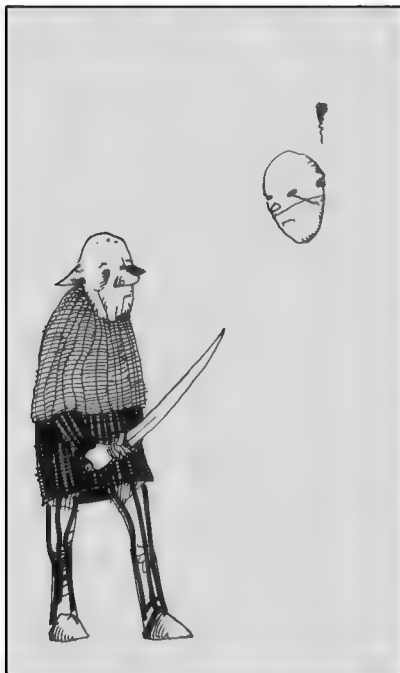
But what does it hear? And more importantly whom it reports to??

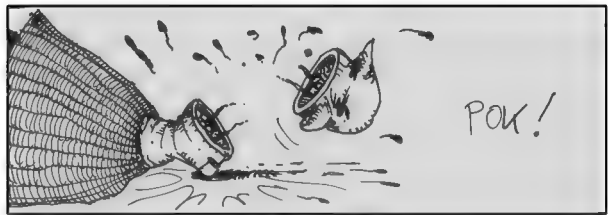
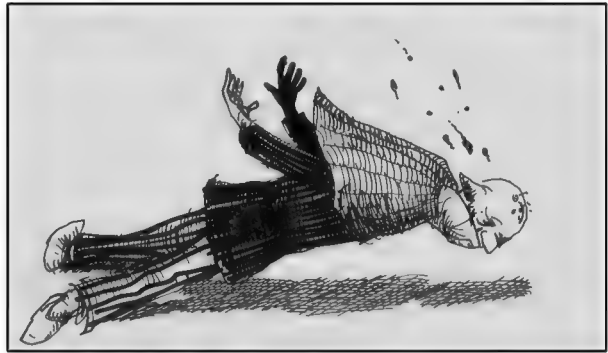
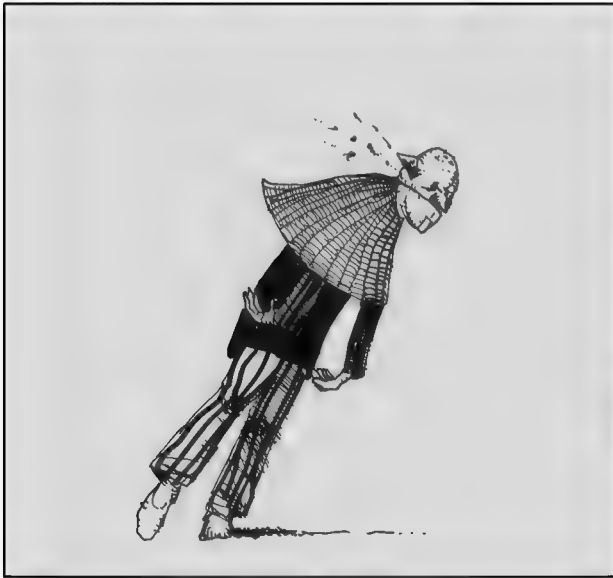


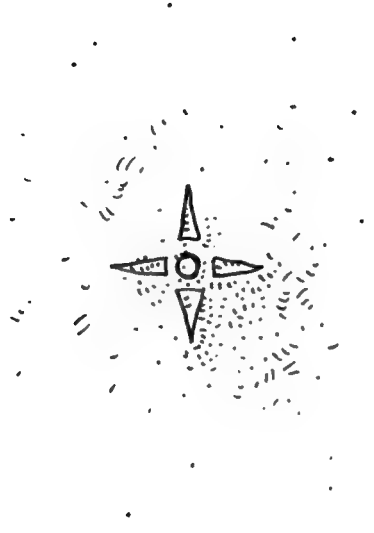
You're in a dire situation, mister Johann. We think this head ,works for Garbutulians!!!

But... How?...





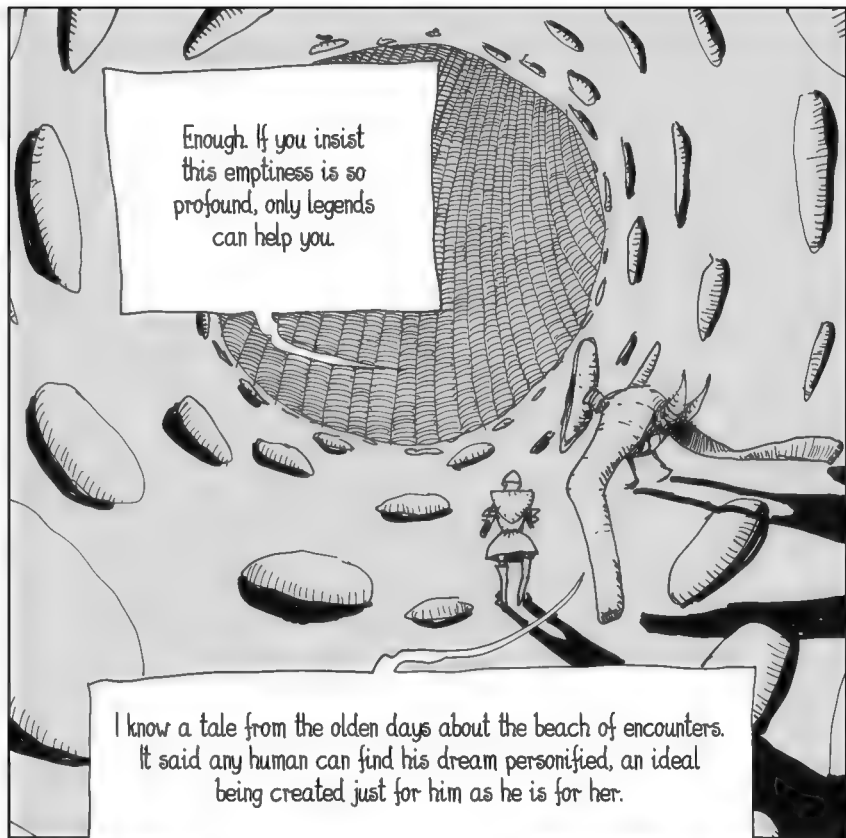
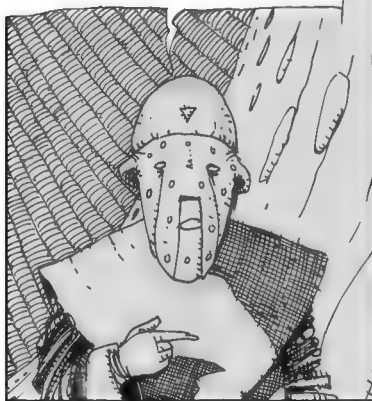






I don't think your problem
requires my help.

On the contrary!
My loneliness isn't something
trivial, felt by hundreds
of people in thousands
of countries!
It's overwhelming, consuming
me from the inside, there's
no simple solution to it.
And you, master Ssufok
deal with things that
are uncommon.



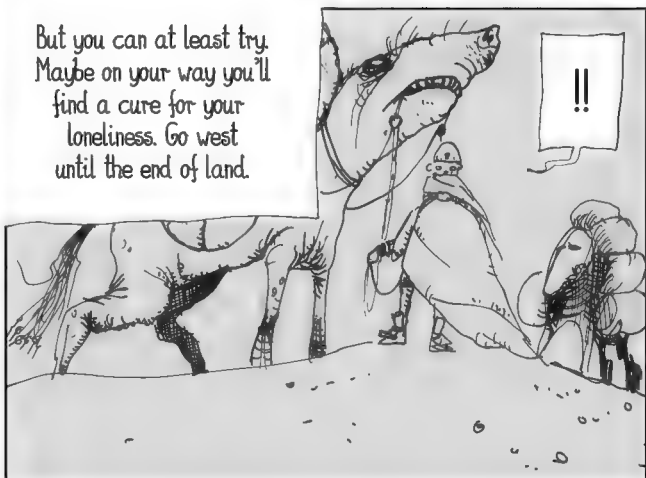
Enough. If you insist
this emptiness is so
profound, only legends
can help you.

I know a tale from the olden days about the beach of encounters.
It said any human can find his dream personified, an ideal
being created just for him as he is for her.

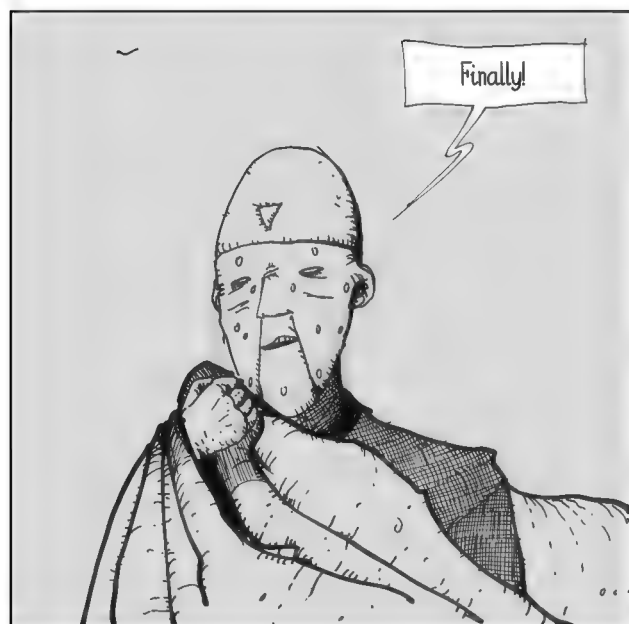
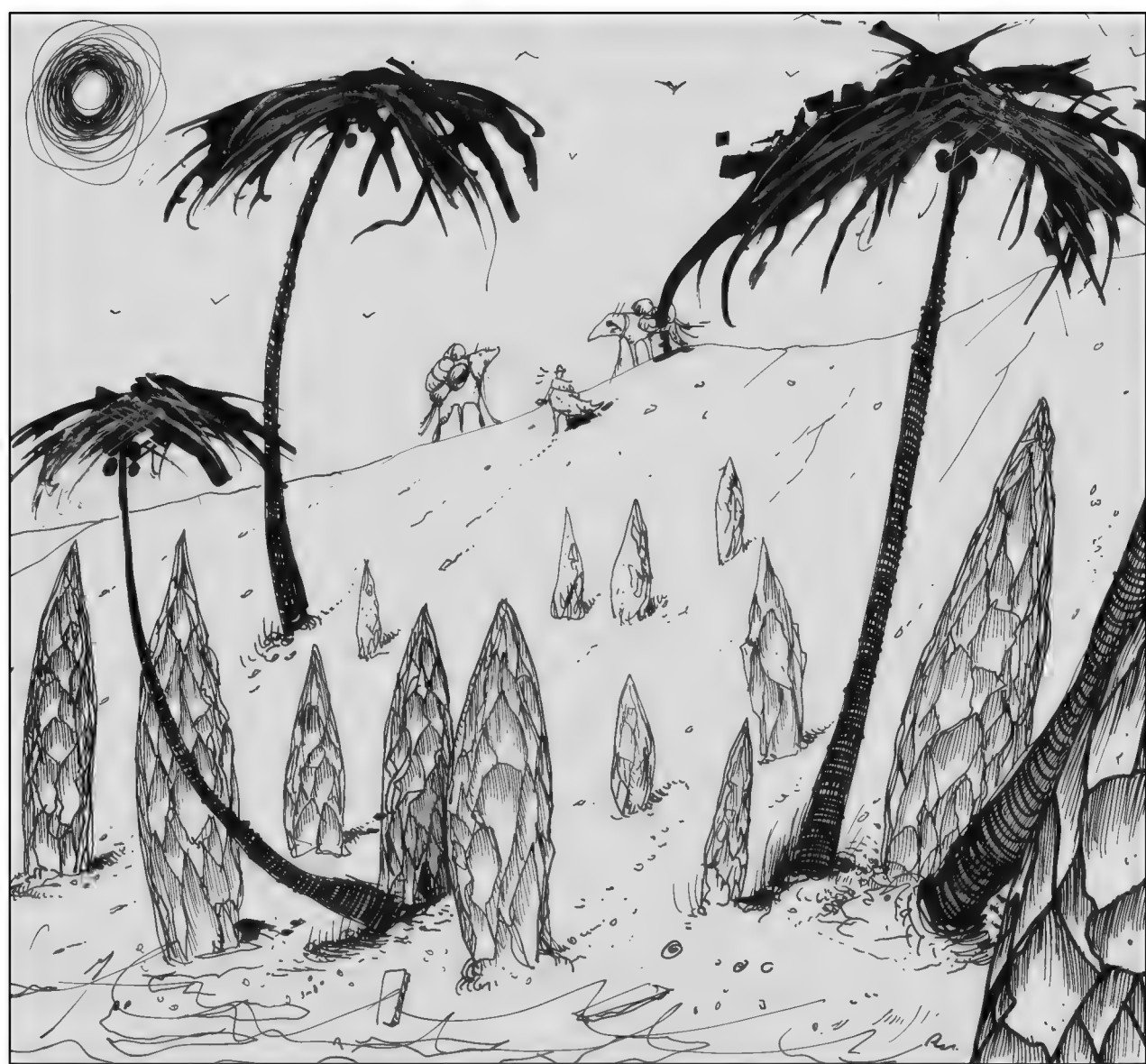
For me it's just a far cry for
unreachable happiness
and fulfillment..

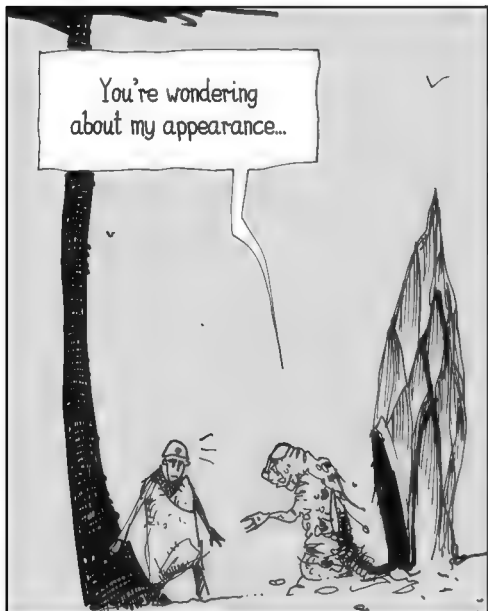


But you can at least try.
Maybe on your way you'll
find a cure for your
loneliness. Go west
until the end of land.



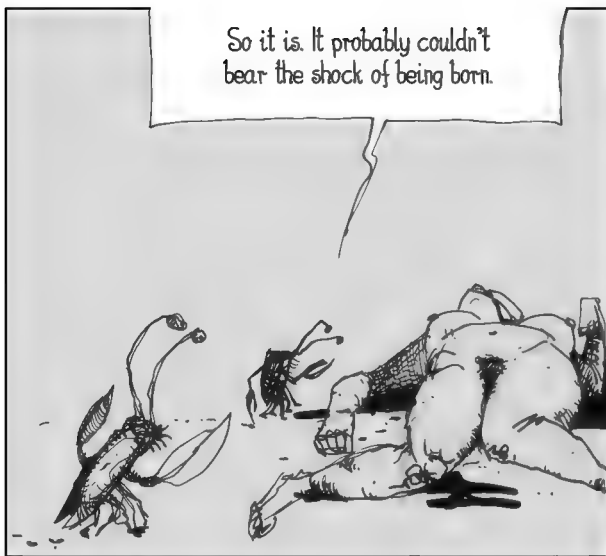
!!







So it is. It probably couldn't
bear the shock of being born.



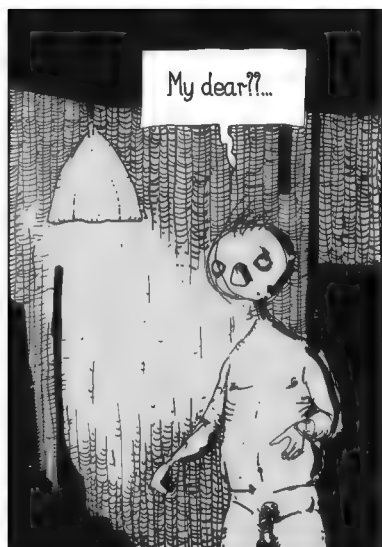
As usual.
They're too fragile
after brood.



What an ineffective
way to reproduce...





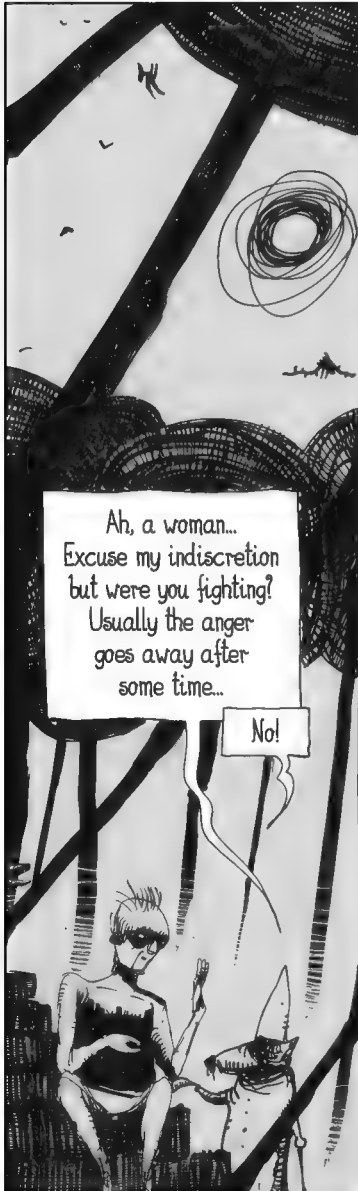




... but it looks like something is troubling you.
And I, Gormik, am a healer of souls and minds,
I can't leave suffering without help.



But... Oh...
She's gone!



Ah, a woman...
Excuse my indiscretion
but were you fighting?
Usually the anger
goes away after
some time...

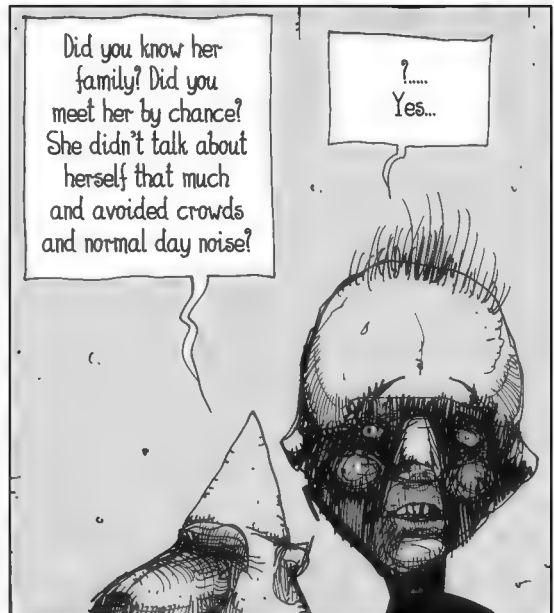
No!



I just fell asleep.
And in the morning
she was gone!
We were in love!



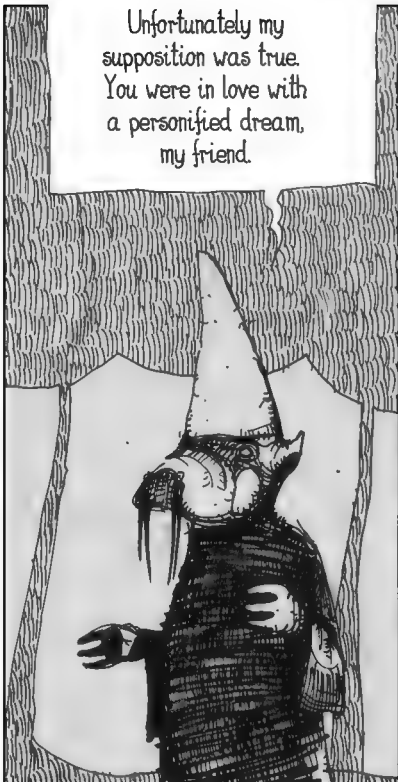
And there was nobody else?
Well, the way she left you
gives me an idea, but
I have to know something
first...



Did you know her
family? Did you
meet her by chance?
She didn't talk about
herself that much
and avoided crowds
and normal day noise?

?....
Yes...

Unfortunately my
supposition was true.
You were in love with
a personified dream,
my friend.

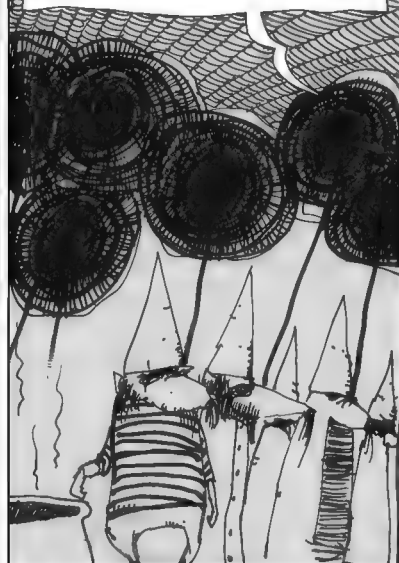


She probably was a dream
of some rich merchant or
aristocrat, who ordered
her materialisation.
She probably went back to him
or broke apart, returning
to the land of dreams.

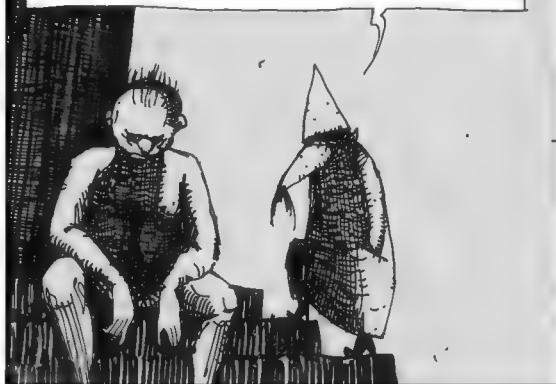


No...
Impossible...

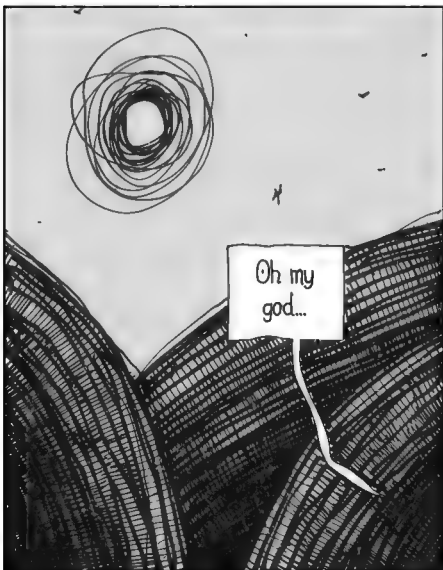
Did she ever sleep?
Was she tired?
Did you see her corporal
functions, did she sweat,
breathe, get dirty?



You experienced a great happiness, my friend.
Sometimes we meet something so wonderful
that memory of it stays with us forever
sweet as a dream and bitter as everything lost.



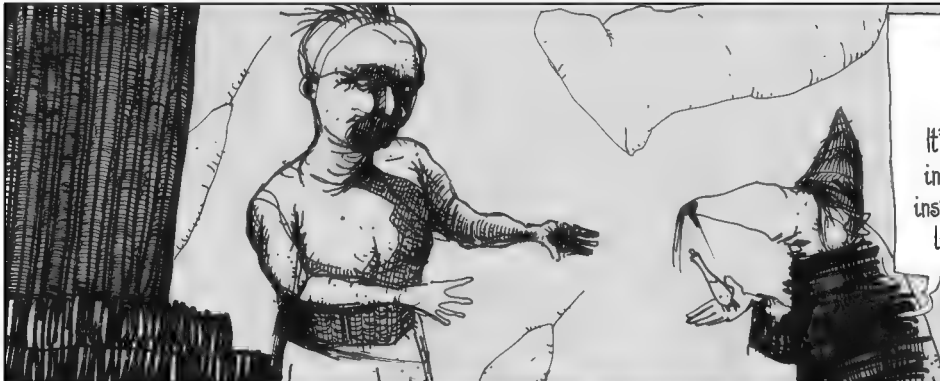
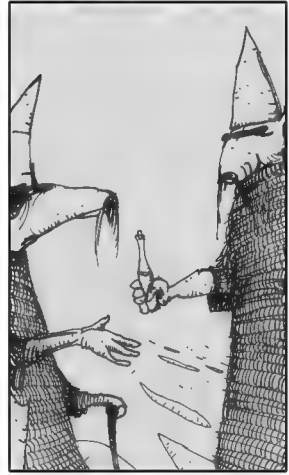
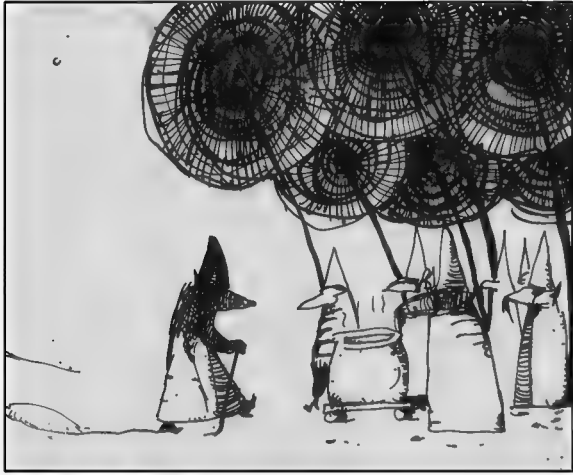
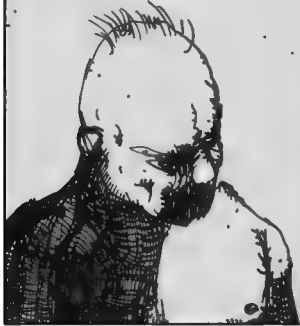
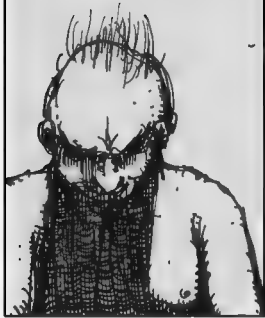
Oh my
god...



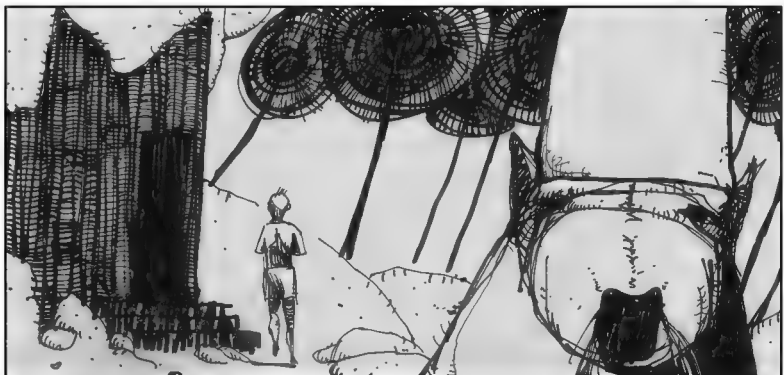
You said she
went back to
the land of dreams.

Yes. And me, Gormik,
can help you search
for her over there.

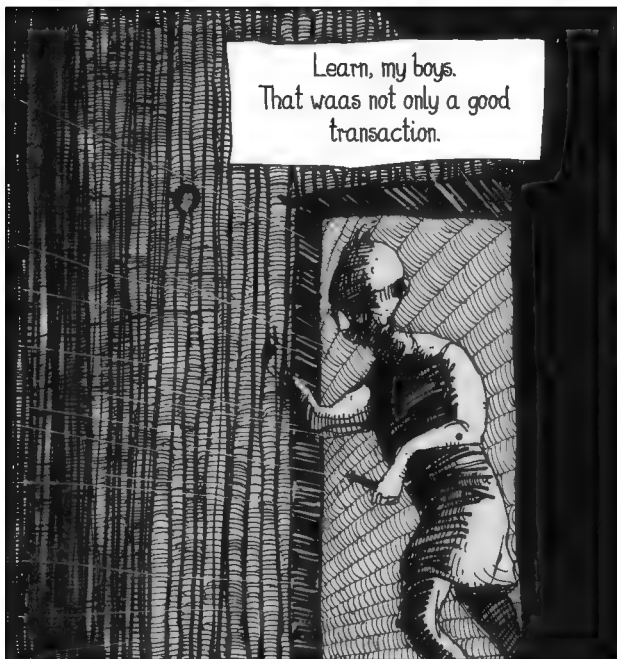
Wait a
minute.



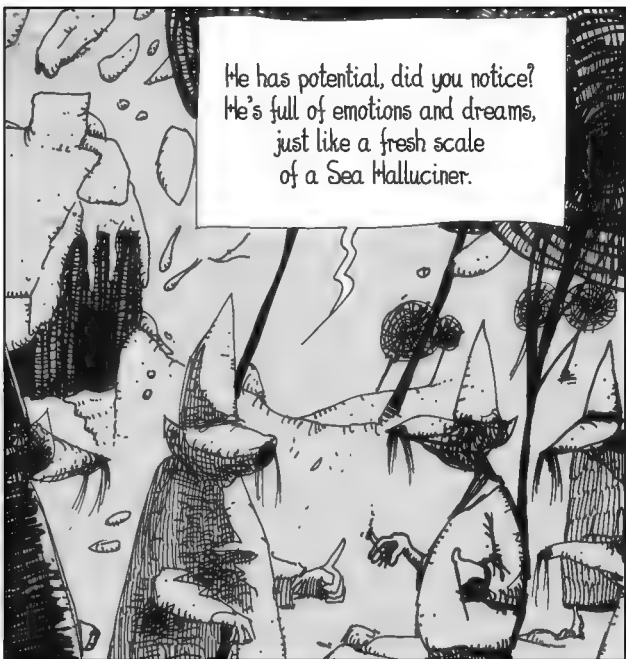
This is a potion
made of sage
of premonition.
It'll allow you to cross
into the land of dream
instead of just dreaming,
like ordinary people.



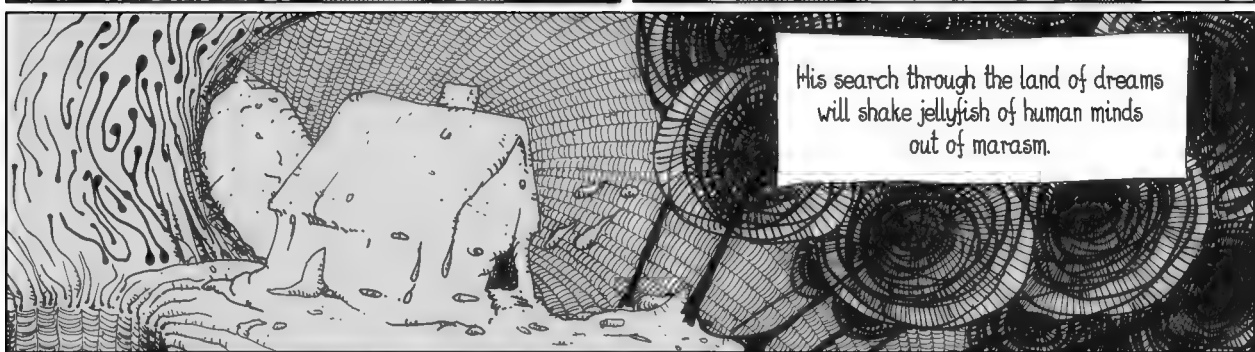
Learn, my boys.
That was not only a good
transaction.



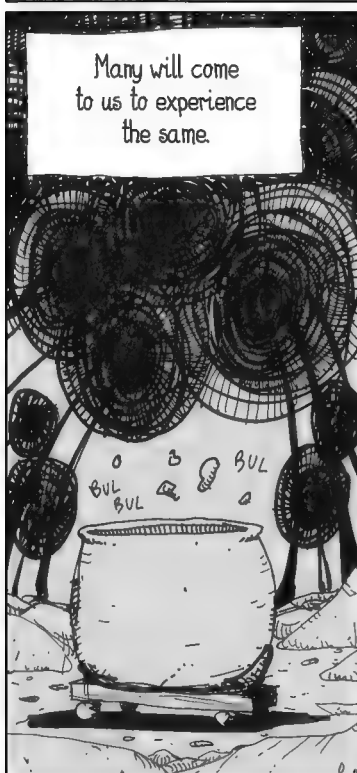
He has potential, did you notice?
He's full of emotions and dreams,
just like a fresh scale
of a Sea Malluciner.



His search through the land of dreams
will shake jellyfish of human minds
out of marasm.

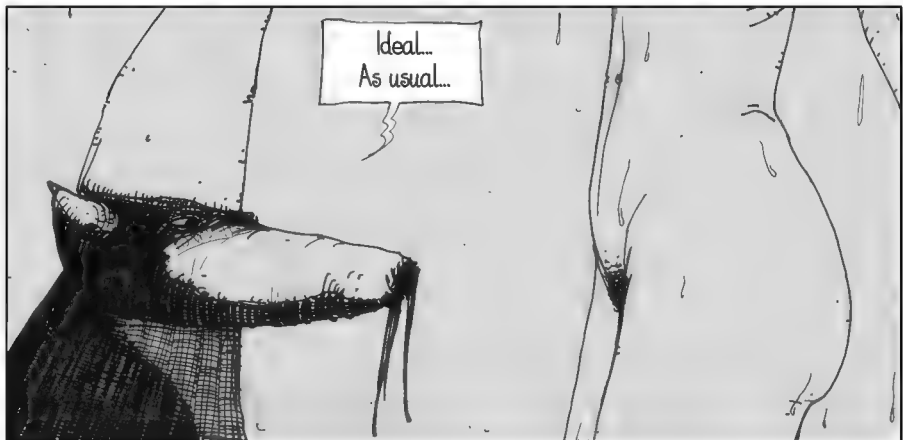
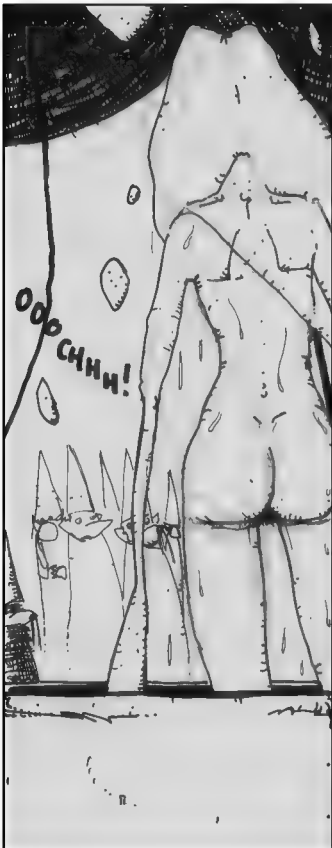
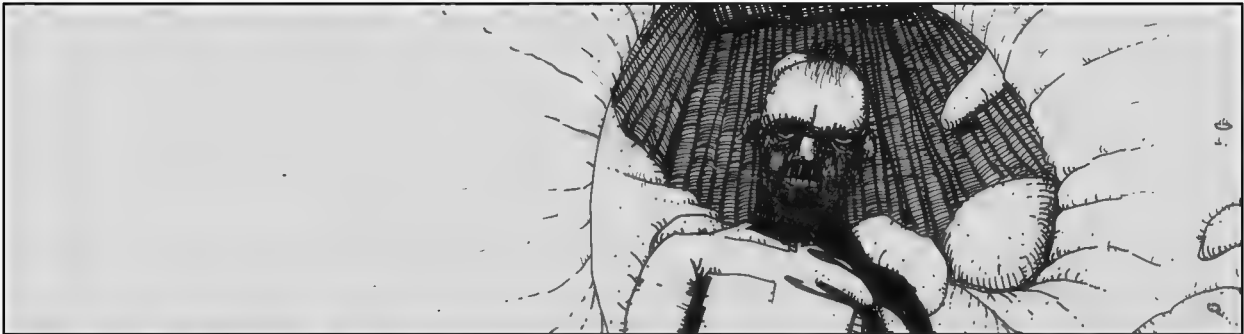
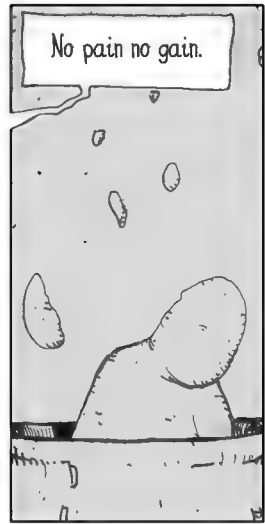
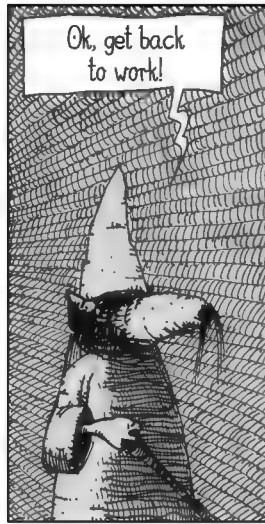


Many will come
to us to experience
the same.



This is just
a beginning.







Mister
Louvuttu Slitta
arrived.

Hello, tailor.
I'm looking for a real artist amongst
your profession. My dear friend,
prince Ergenemi recommended you.

You came to the right place.
Wine? Food? Meth?

No, thank you.
I'd rather get
to the point,
and those blessed commodities
leave for later times
after we discuss our matters.

If you're as good
as they say,
my order will
be easy for you.

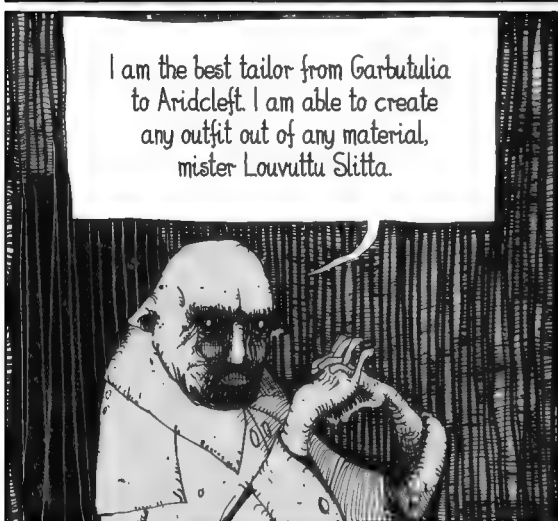
My lord... I'm better
than what they say.



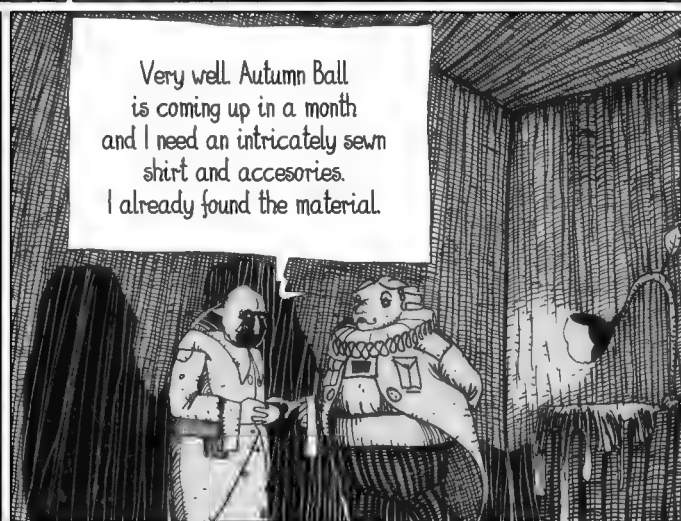
This is Siola, a dancer from Mogluk in a dress tailored by me.



And this is Basbug, prince of Garbutulia, in a sleeping gown made out of Siola.



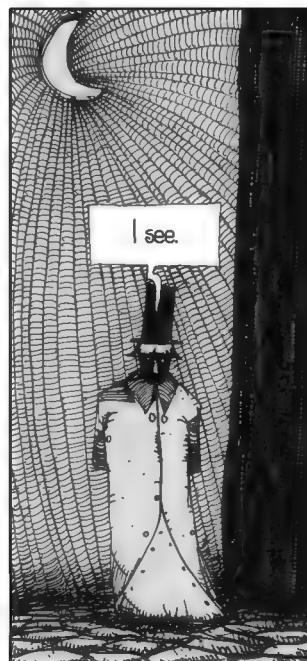
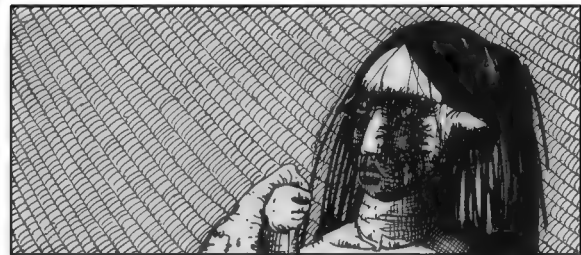
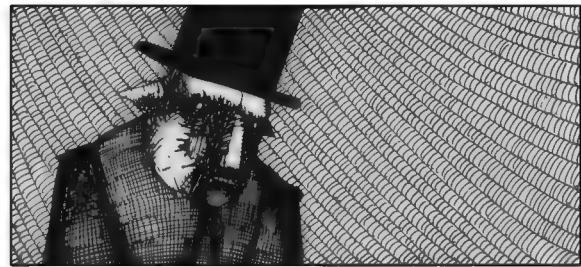
I am the best tailor from Garbutulia to Aridcleft. I am able to create any outfit out of any material, mister Louvuttu Slitta.




Very well. Autumn Ball is coming up in a month and I need an intricately sewn shirt and accessories. I already found the material.



Here.





Supposedly count
Drogan Ogul will arrive
with his new mistress.

Scandalous!

My dear ladies. If we only interbred
within aristocracy, it would be
finished after five generations.



Besides that,
have you perhaps seen
Louvutu Slitta?
I can't get a hold
of him since a month...



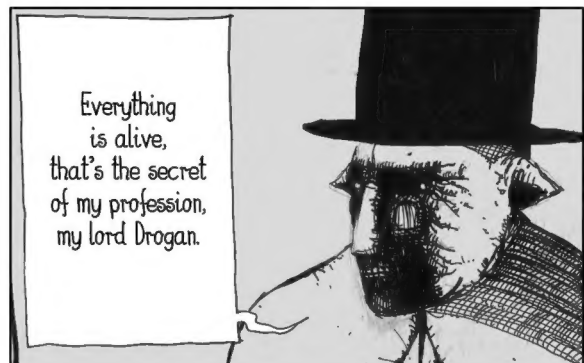
Ach!



This dress is
a masterpiece.
It appears almost alive!



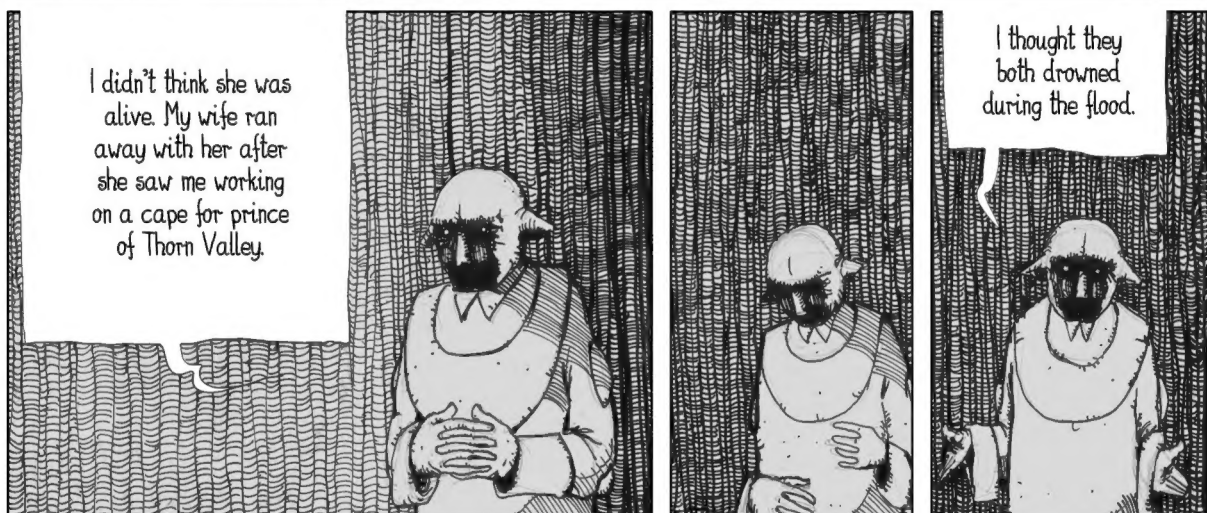
Everything
is alive,
that's the secret
of my profession,
my lord Drogan.





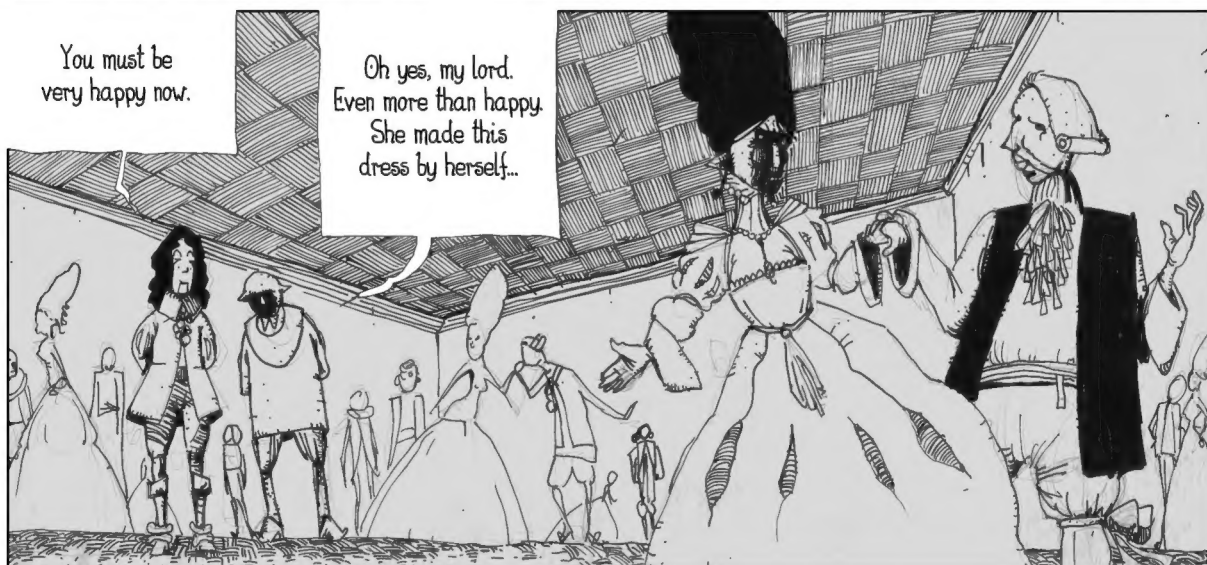
I had no idea, you had a daughter.
And that she is so gorgeous.

Thank you,
my lord.
You're most
kind...



I didn't think she was
alive. My wife ran
away with her after
she saw me working
on a cape for prince
of Thorn Valley.

I thought they
both drowned
during the flood.



You must be
very happy now.

Oh yes, my lord.
Even more than happy.
She made this
dress by herself...



End of Old Testament